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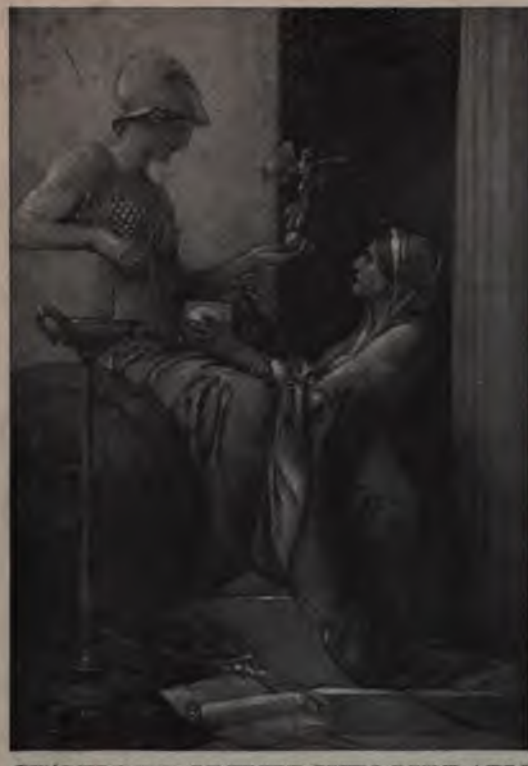

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THE WORKS

OF

HENRY FIELDING, ESQ.

With an Essay on his Life and Genius

BY

ARTHUR MURPHY, ESQ.

A NEW EDITION

EDITED BY

JAMES P. BROWNE, M.D. (EDINB.)

IN ELEVEN VOLUMES

VOL. I.

LONDON
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ADVERTISEMENT.

To this Edition, which has been printed from the correct Quarto Edition of 1762, is added, "The Essay on Nothing," originally published by Fielding, and often since reprinted in various miscellaneous collections, but hitherto not admitted into his works. A few notes have also been contributed to Mr. Murphy's Essay on his Life and Genius. For these the undersigned is accountable.

ALEX. CHALMERS.

London, 1806.

CONTENTS

OF

THE FIRST VOLUME.

PAGE

PREFACE.

ESSAY ON THE LIFE AND GENIUS OF HENRY FIELDING, ESQ. 1

LOVE IN SEVERAL MASQUES, a Comedy 81

The TEMPLE BEAU, a Comedy 181

The AUTHOR'S FARCE; with a Puppet shew, called The PLEASURES OF THE TOWN 277

The COFFEE HOUSE POLITICIAN; or, The JUSTICE CAUGHT IN HIS OWN TRAP, a Comedy 355

The TRAGEDY OF TRAGEDIES; or, The LIFE AND DEATH OF TOM THUMB THE GREAT 447

PREFACE.

More than a century has passed away since the death of Henry Fielding; and yet he still holds his place as the Prince of British Novelists, notwithstanding the great genius displayed by some of his contemporaries and successors as writers of prose fiction. Such was Byron's opinion when he pronounced him to be the 'prose Homer 'of human nature.' Equally enthusiastic in his praise was his great countryman Gibbon, as the following brief eulogy eloquently proves: 'Our immortal Fielding was 'of the younger branch of the Earls of Denbigh, who 'drew their origin from the Counts of Hapsburg, the 'lineal descendants of Eltrico, in the seventh century 'Dukes of Alsace. Far different have been the for-'tunes of the English and German divisions of the family 'of Hapsburg; the former, the knights and sheriffs of 'Leicestershire, have slowly risen to the dignity of a 'peerage; the latter, the Emperors of Germany and 'Kings of Spain, have threatened the Old, and invaded 'the treasures of the New World. The successors of 'Charles V. may disdain their brethren of England; 'but the romance of "Tom Jones," that exquisite pic-'ture of human manners, will outlive the palace of the 'Escurial, and the imperial eagle of Austria.'

And here is what Sir Walter Scott, a kindred genius, says of that exquisite picture of human manners, 'Tom 'Jones:' 'The felicitous contrivance and happy ex-'trication of the story, where every incident tells upon 'and advances the catastrophe, while, at the same time, 'it illustrates the characters of those interested in its 'approach, cannot too often be mentioned with the 'highest approbation. The attention of the reader is 'never diverted or puzzled by unnecessary digressions, 'or recalled to the main story by abrupt and startling 'occurrences; he glides down the narrative like a boat 'on the surface of some broad navigable stream, which 'only winds enough to gratify the voyager with the 'varied beauty of its banks.'

But, besides his superior excellence in the artistic construction of a most interesting and instructive story, Fielding was endowed, to an extraordinary extent, with the mental qualities which enable a writer to be a truthful and brilliant delineator of the characters and manners of mankind. His powers of observation, for quickness, accuracy, and retentiveness, have, perhaps, never been surpassed; and the place he held in society, at different periods of his life, afforded him a wider scope for the fruitful exercise of such powers than was allotted to others whose talents led them into similar courses of literature; for, being a gentleman born, and connected by blood with some of the most ancient nobility of England and Ireland, and his father being a general in the army, he had opportunities, early in life, of witnessing the manners of those who were the leaders of fashion; and the unhappy state of pecuniary embarrassment under

which he was afterwards suffering could not fail to expose to, and indelibly impress upon, an imprudent but yet generous and unselfish mind like his, the chicanery and over-reaching covetousness of persons, whose source of livelihood chiefly sprang from the misfortunes of those whose pecuniary wants are sure to arise when their generosity degenerates into reckless, blamable extravagance. As a Bow Street magistrate, too, he had special opportunities of observing the coarse ways and selfish depravity of the unhappy criminal classes, some of whom had, no doubt, fallen into the abyss of moral turpitude. Thus circumstanced, he was enabled, by the great quickness and accuracy of his perceptions and his superior discrimination, to acquire a vast fund of knowledge relating to the diversified inclinations of mankind, and their actions under peculiar conditions. And this accumulated knowledge a memory, tenacious of occurrences in great minuteness of detail, kept always ready for use.

But such mental qualities as these were not the only ones with which Fielding was eminently gifted. He was likewise possessed of talent for philosophic discrimination in regard to the instinctive motives of human conduct, which even a profound metaphysician might have cause to envy; though the generosity of the philosopher's temper would, perhaps, prompt him to exclaim—

'Non equidem invideo, miror magis,'

for to such a man our author's mode of life must seem but ill calculated to engender metaphysical speculations;

since his instincts obviously prompted him to follow and investigate nature in her *active outward* moods, in order to imbibe for his own gratification, and to transfuse through the hearts and minds of others, lessons drawn from the manners and conduct of mankind, such as he thought were best fitted to direct and lead human beings through the unsullied paths of truthfulness, sincerity, and divine charity, in all her affecting modes.

To enable him adequately to fulfil this purpose, Fielding was endowed with the power of rapidly associating and concentrating his thoughts, so as to render their evolvement precise, easy, and natural, and that power was, in a high degree, sustained in him, by language at once fluent, unaffectedly persuasive, and singularly appropriate. A remarkable instance of this talent lies in the fact of his having written a play, before he went to rest, after a night of social enjoyment; and which was next day offered for representation on the stage. Yet, notwithstanding the haste in which his dramatic works were produced, his power of concentrating his thoughts and superior faculty of language, enabled him eloquently to describe a vast amount of incidents, all of which are interesting and instructive in their consequences, with such transparent luminousness as rendered his descriptions of manners and conduct palpable to any one of the most ordinary capacity. Nor need it be feared that, even to persons who are averse to minuteness of detail, the copiousness of the incidents of any story of his is a thing at all likely to be wearisome; so admirably are his thoughts set in the attractive garb of wit and humour; and, above all, so intense is the

glowing human interest with which his principal characters are invested.

And, surely, no one, unless blinded by angry prejudice, can fail to discern that the spirit which actuated him as an author was an ardent wish to see his fellow-creatures, both high and low, honest, beneficent, and happy. And, as hypocrisy is a vice that mainly tends to retard and obstruct the supremacy of the noblest elements of human nature in the conduct of mankind, that vice was made the mark of his blasting censure and galling ridicule.

Fielding was, indeed, characteristically straightforward. As a writer, he was candid, sometimes imprudent; and thus did he expose himself to the enmity of some whose friendship was worth having. Richardson, who is undoubtedly one of our greatest writers of imaginative story, and shares with his rival, Fielding, the paternity of the British novel, was estranged from him when he found that the latter had, in his first novel, 'Joseph 'Andrews,' obviously meant to ridicule the first-born offspring of his own genius, 'Pamela.' Yet, though Richardson had cause to be offended, it may be doubted if that hostile sally had its rise in ill-natured envy; for Fielding was of a generous disposition; and he could hardly fail to be impressed with the originality of Richardson's genius, and the extent and richness of his mental resources, both of sentiment and intellect. And that such was the case, is shewn in the high commendations which he afterwards ungrudgingly bestowed upon 'Clarissa,' the finest of Richardson's works.

Is it not more likely that his moderate share of

cautious discretion was overpowered by a strong sense of the ludicrous; a mental quality with which Fielding was eminently gifted, and which he was prone to give way to, as we find in his burlesque ridicule of authors in some of his plays.

Nor is it to be wondered at that of two men, so opposite to one another in habits and character, neither could fail to find room for critical animadversion upon the writings of the other. One was young, gay, and indiscreet; the other far advanced in life, sedate, and prudent. Both were of a social temper, Fielding eminently so: but the sociality of the one was characterised by homely quietude and sobriety; the other loved to combine intellectual converse with joviality and dissipation.

To a man like Richardson, then, one of Fielding's disposition would naturally be open to misconception, in regard to his moral character. But when to this prepossession is added the anger engendered by wounded vanity, it is not to be wondered at that he should have entertained an unfavourable opinion even of the lofty genius of the author of 'Tom Jones.' And since it appears that vanity was a paramount ingredient in the mental constitution of Richardson, and that that selfish passion was fostered and even pampered by influential members of society, it is still less surprising to see the indelibility of his resentment. To such an extent, indeed, was he blinded by his anger against Fielding, that he even brought himself to say that that great genius was 'destitute of invention and talents; that 'the run of his best works was nearly over; and that

'he would soon be forgotten as an author.' Such, as has been already noticed, was not the opinion of Gibbon, Byron, and Scott; and it is interesting to see what the last of these great writers says of the respective merits of the authors of 'Clarissa' and 'Tom Jones.'

'Even Richardson's Novels,' says Sir Walter Scott, 'are but a step from the old romance, approaching, 'indeed, more nearly to the ordinary course of events, 'but still dealing in improbable incidents, and in char-'acters swelled out beyond the ordinary limits of 'humanity. The "History of a Foundling" is truth and 'human nature itself, and there lies the inestimable ad-'vantage which it possesses over all previous fictions of 'this particular kind.'

Indeed, the characters in Fielding's works are drawn with so much graphic power, and are fraught with such intense human interest, that they must surely be destined to be met with a warm welcome by every one who loves to see the complicated and varying phases of human character and manners faithfully and vividly portrayed. Yet it is to be regretted that there are expressions and situations to be met with in these wonderful compositions which must be offensive to the mind of one delicately alive to the impropriety of depicting scenes of life and manners suggestive of immoral tendencies. But passages of this kind in the writings of Fielding and other bright ornaments of literature seem to have been accepted as truthful, and therefore the most effective, exponents of the manners of the times they lived in, because they were consonant with the laxity of morals which was then prevalent.

With regard to Fielding, indeed, it is but fair to infer that such passages in his writings as are not conducive to purity of thought, or accordant with the improved tone of manners in the present day, were used by him for the purposes of producing such an amount of consistency as would enable him to depict, in the truest colours, the variously complicated characters of mankind; and that with the view of creating an utter abhorrence of evil-doers, and not from a prurient tendency to indulge himself in the use of coarseness of language or indelicacy of allusion. And is not this view of Fielding's disposition corroborated by the following quotations from his own writings?

In his Essay on Conversation, for instance, he says—

'A fifth particular to be avoided is indecency. We 'are not only to forbear the repeating such words as 'would give an immediate affront to a lady of reputa-'tion; but the raising any loose ideas tending to the 'offence of that modesty, which if a young woman 'hath not something more than the affectation of, she 'is not worthy the regard even of a man of pleasure, 'provided he hath any delicacy in his constitution. How 'inconsistent with good-breeding it is to give pain and 'confusion to such is sufficiently apparent; all double-'entendres and obscene jests are therefore carefully to 'be avoided before them. But suppose no ladies present, 'nothing can be meaner, lower, and less productive of 'rational mirth, than this loose conversation. For my 'part, I cannot conceive how the idea of jest or plea-'santry came ever to be annexed to one of our highest 'and most serious pleasures. Nor can I help observing,

'to the discredit of such merriment, that it is commonly 'the last resource of impotent wit, the weak strainings 'of the lowest, silliest, and dullest fellows in the world.' And he says elsewhere—

> '—— Indecency's the bane of ridicule,
> 'And only charms the Libertine and Fool.'

And the following passage from the 'Temple Beau' is clearly indicative of the dominant characteristics of Fielding's mind.—'Virtue may, indeed, be unfashion-'able in this age; for ignorance and vice will always 'live together. And sure the world is come to that 'height of folly and ignorance, posterity will call this 'the leaden age. But virtue loses not its worth by 'being slighted by the world, more than the pearl, when 'the foolish cock preferred a barley-corn. Virtue is a 'diamond which, when the world despises, 'tis plain 'that knaves and fools have too much sway therein.' And though admiration for female beauty was a prevailing feature of his character, yet does he thus eloquently state his preference of moral worth.—'Beauty, 'as the flowery blossoms, soon fades: but the diviner 'excellences of the mind, like the medicinal virtues of 'the plant, remain in it, when all those charms are 'withered.'

Is it not clear, then, that the natural bent of Fielding's disposition would lead him to exclaim with Horace—

> 'Odi profanum vulgus, et arceo,'

had not the poverty-stricken condition into which he had fallen made him acquainted with the unhappy and

often demoralizing accompaniments by which that dire attendant upon unfrugal improvidence is sure to be surrounded?

But though the evil influence of such an unhappy position was seemingly calculated to affect injuriously so social, unsuspicious, and generous a character as Fielding, still the intrinsic energy of the highest attribute of human nature must have been paramountly felt and manifested by him in his familiar intercourse with some of the noblest and best of men; such as the Dukes of Richmond and Bedford, Lord Lyttleton, and the singularly beneficent Ralph Allen; else it is hardly to be supposed that they would bestow upon him signal marks of personal friendship, even though prompted to do so by their admiration of his unrivalled genius—unrivalled, certainly, in that path of literature, which in his maturer years he so brilliantly illumined and indelibly stamped with the manifold and truthful images of human character and conduct. Even when his early death had put an end to his racking bodily pain, and to the consuming mental anguish which was, doubtless, preying upon him, at the dismal worldly prospects of those that were dear to his affectionate nature, even then those humane harbingers of comfort to the afflicted failed not to bring succour to those he left behind him. Such evidence as this is surely enough to rescue the character of Fielding from the acrimonious estimate of it entertained so persistently by Richardson and his partisan admirers, and the ill-natured aspersions of Horace Walpole.

Fielding was endowed with an exuberant sense of

wit and humour: so much so, indeed, that his good friend, Lord Lyttleton, used to declare that he was possessed of these attributes in conversation in a higher degree than even Pope or any other wit of the time.

Now, as this talent must have congenial objects to feed upon, before it is possible adequately to display it in descriptions of manners with lifelike reality, it behoved him to frequent the company in which experience had taught him such objects were most likely to be met with. And that he failed to meet with them in the high ranks of society is thus attested by himself. 'I will venture to say that highest life is 'much the dullest, and affords very little humour or 'entertainment. The various callings in lower spheres 'produce the great variety of humorous characters; 'whereas, here, except among the few who are engaged 'in the pursuit of ambition, and the fewer still who 'have a relish for pleasure, all is vanity and servile 'imitation. Dressing and cards, eating and drinking, 'bowing and courtesying, make up the business of 'their lives. Some there are, however, upon whom 'passion exercises its tyranny beyond the bounds which 'decency prescribes: of these the ladies are as much 'distinguished by their noble intrepidity, and a certain 'superior contempt of reputation, from the fair ones 'of meaner degree, as a woman of quality is by the 'elegance and delicacy of her sentiments from the 'honest wife of a yeoman or shopkeeper. Lady Bel-'laston was of this intrepid character; but let not my 'country readers conclude from her that this is the 'general conduct of women of fashion, or that we wish

'to represent them as such. They might as well suppose 'that every clergyman was represented by Thwackum 'or every soldier by Ensign Northerton.'

In order, therefore, to delineate in nature's truthful forms and transparent colours the characters and manners of mankind in its varied phases and degrees of rank, Fielding found it necessary to introduce into his dramas and novels persons of vulgar station, as well as some in a higher sphere, whose immoral habits and coarseness of allusion and language must be offensive to purity and delicacy of feeling. But still, as such passages are but little likely to gain the favourable attention of the gentle and the high-minded, it is but natural to suppose that in such persons there would be an indisposition to imitate habits to which they would necessarily have an instinctive aversion. And is it not reasonable to expect that even those, less happily born and constituted, who peruse such stories, may be induced to restrain their evil tendencies, and relinquish immoral practices, when they find that, all through this great novelist's works, wickedness, unscrupulous covetousness, and the unfeeling selfishness of the heartless debauchee, are always met by galling discomfiture and detestation? And is not this detestation likely to be intensified in ingenuous minds, when it is found that the vile machinations which are prompted by such vicious principles, are used for the purpose of destroying the happiness, and blasting the fair fame, of some of the most exquisite and lovable characters that the wit of man hath bequeathed to literature. Unenviable, indeed, must be the mind of that man or woman who can read of

the extreme poverty and ensnaring temptations which beset the beautiful, virtuous, and in every respect charming Amelia—that exquisite creation of Fielding's genius—without a feeling of abhorrence towards such vile characters as the plausible Mrs. Ellison, and her noble colleague in sensual iniquity, who, with heartless hypocrisy, sought to drag down so pure a nature to irretrievable ruin.

Let us again consider the useful lesson conveyed to us in the intercourse of Booth and his early friend and benefactor, Colonel James. Gratitude, and a temper characteristically confiding, rendered the former so blind to the real character and intentions of the latter, that he had nearly become the unconscious promoter of his own irreparable disgrace and eternal sorrow, had not the exalted purity of his beloved Amelia's nature enabled her to resist those importunities of his, which she had cause to know were such as would place her in humiliating and hazardous situations. And doth not the suffering to which this pure-minded and amiable woman was exposed, through the unsuspecting imprudence of one of the fondest of husbands, show how a brave, affectionate, and well-intentioned man may, from want of moral firmness and prudent forethought, be, unwittingly, the source of unhappiness to the object of his heart's true love.

An instance of the generosity of Fielding's nature is shown in his care to abstain from singling out any individual for sarcastic animadversion and denunciation. He denounced the crime, but without identifying the criminal. In the Preface to his Miscellanies, he him-

self thus writes: 'Indeed, there is no man who speaks 'or thinks with more detestation of the modern custom 'of libelling. I look on the practice of stabbing a 'man's character in the dark to be as base and bar-'barous as that of stabbing him with a poignard in 'the same manner; nor have I ever been once in my 'life guilty of it.' 'And,' he continues, 'it is not here, 'I suppose, necessary to distinguish between ridicule 'and scurrility; between a jest on a public character, 'and the murther of a private one.' Again he says: 'I never was, nor will be, the author of anonymous 'scandal on the private history of a family of any 'person whatever.' And he continues in the following words: 'My reader will pardon my having dwelt a 'little on this particular, since it is so especially 'necessary in this age, when almost all the wit we 'have is applied in this way; and when I have 'already been a martyr to such unjust suspicion, of 'which I will relate one instance. While I was last 'winter' laid up in the gout, with a favourite child 'dying in one bed, and my wife in a condition very 'little better on another, attended with other circum-'stances, which served as very proper decorations for 'such a scene, I received a letter from a friend, desiring 'me to vindicate myself from two very opposite re-'flections, which two opposite parties thought fit to 'cast upon me; viz., the one of writing in the '*Champion* (though I had not then writ in it for up-'wards of half a year), the other of writing in the '*Gazetteer*, in which I never had the honour of in-'serting a single word. To defend myself, therefore,

'as well as I can from all past, and to enter a caveat 'against all future censure of this kind, I once more 'solemnly declare, that since the end of June, 1741, I 'have not, besides "Joseph Andrews," published one 'word, except "The Opposition, a Vision;" "A Defence '"of the Dutchess of Marlborough's book;" "Miss Lucy '"in Town" (in which I had a very small share). And 'I do further protest, that I will never hereafter pub-'lish any book or pamphlet whatever, to which I will 'not put my name. A promise, which, as I shall 'sacredly keep, so will it, I hope, be so far believed, 'that I may henceforth receive no more praise or 'censure, to which I have not the least title.'

Surely there is not to be met with a soul so cold, that must not be warmed into deep sympathy for the domestic suffering of a man, whose genius was constantly strained for the purpose of leading mankind into the paths of virtue and unselfish contentment, a man whose worldly sorrows are hinted at in the concluding paragraph of the Preface to his Miscellanies. 'And now, my good-natured reader, recommending my 'works to your candour, I bid you heartily farewell, 'and take this with you, that you may never be inter-'rupted in the reading those miscellanies, with that degree 'of heart-ache which hath often discomposed me in 'writing them.'

The moral aim of Fielding as a writer is told by himself in the Dedication to the Public of his 'Historical 'Register,' a play. 'If,' says he, 'nature hath given me 'any talents at ridiculing vice and imposture, I shall 'not be indolent, nor afraid of exerting them, while

'the liberty of the press and the stage subsists, that is 'to say, while we have any liberty left among us.' And whilst he was scourging the vicious he rejoiced in the conscious immunity of the virtuous, as is evident from the following lines taken from one of his epilogues:—

> 'And while these scenes the conscious knave displease,
> 'Who feels within the criminal he sees;
> 'The uncorrupt and good must smile to find
> 'No mark for satire in his generous mind.'

But it was against hypocrisy his satiric ridicule was studiously directed: for hypocrisy was in the eyes of Fielding, as his own words declare, 'The most cunning 'as well as malicious of all the vices which have ever 'corrupted the nature of man.' His good intentions may also be seen in his Essay on Conversation, where he says that his design was 'to ridicule out of society 'one of the most pernicious evils which attends it, 'namely, pampering the gross appetites of selfishness 'and ill-nature with the shame and disquietude of others, 'whereas,' he continues, 'I have endeavoured in it to 'show that true good-breeding consists in contributing 'with our utmost power to the satisfaction and happiness 'of all around us.'

To render our hatred of vice the more effectual, Fielding was not content with delineating its varied features in all their native deformity: but, with the view of rendering them still more hideous and repulsive, he placed them in striking contrast with the charming and attractive portraits of the virtuous and the good. What fine examples of this are to be found all through his works! How truly exemplified is it in the characters

of Allworthy and the elder Blifil, in 'Tom Jones,' where they are discoursing upon charity! How transparent is the canting, avaricious selfishness of the one, and the divinely generous and equitable disposition of the other! And where is the one who will not rejoice at the retributive justice which awaited the sinister and unforgiving villainy of the younger Blifil, and that which fell to the lot of the brave, the generous, and unselfish Tom Jones, whom that consummate hypocrite had constantly maligned and persecuted? How strong is the contrast between Jonathan Wild, the scoundrel, without a single virtuous instinct, and his old schoolfellow and victim, Heartfree, who was cheered in the midst of misfortune by his deep-seated moral and religious feelings! Nor is the disparity less striking in the case of the profligate spouse of Wild, Letitia Snap, and the persecuted Heartfree's admirable wife. And is there not an important moral lesson contained in the powerfully-told record of the fate which, in the end, awaited the hard-hearted profligacy of one of the parties, and that which cheered and consoled the affectionate benevolence and unselfish honesty and faithfulness of the other? And is not our author's love of justice and detestation of profligate dishonesty strongly evinced in the dialogue between the unscrupulous magistrate, Squeezum, and the just one, Worthy, where the former thus shamelessly expresses himself. 'But I think it incumbent on us all' (magistrates) 'to liscountenance any prosecution of ourselves 'on any account whatsoever.' 'To discountenance it,' retorted Worthy, 'by the innocence of our lives is, 'indeed, laudable, but no farther. It is a cursed law

'which exempts the maker or the executor of it from 'its penalty. And let me tell you, Mr. Squeezum, he is 'the greatest of villains, who hath the impudence to 'hold the sword of justice, while he deserves its edge.'

So do we see in the contrasted conduct and motives of the two divines in 'Joseph Andrews,' the inhospitable covetousness of the swinish Trulliber, and the utterly unselfish benevolence and chivalrous bravery of the warm-hearted Abraham Adams. Do we not there see that the truculent sense of independence and purse-proud arrogance of Trulliber must naturally have lost him the love and respect of those to whose comfort he was bound, more especially by his calling, to minister? while Adams, the pennyless and ardent assertor of the rightful calls of the afflicted for assistance, and the utterly fearless and enthusiastic champion of innocence, and the righteous assertor of the supremacy of truth as a guide to our actions, cannot fail to gain a permanent hold of the friendly affection and admiration of everyone; for it is to be hoped that very few indeed are so completely callous as to be insensible to the intrinsic beauty of beneficence towards those who are sorely in need of comfort. Yet, good and true-hearted as he is, it is hard to refrain from laughter at the ludicrous discomfiture to which he is so frequently exposed by his unsuspecting simplicity and eccentric absence of mind.

How admirably drawn, also, are the characters of Colonel Bath and Squire Western! How original they are, and how true to nature! What a contrast between the fiery impetuosity and outrageous self-will of Western, and the cool courage and captious temper of Bath; for

while the latter, from a high yet fantastic sense of honour, was ready to risk his own life, or that of his dearest friend, for the slightest infringement of the duellist's notion of what true magnanimity consists of, the former was content to submit to a caning without demanding that kind of satisfaction which was so dear to the heart of the colonel. Was this conduct, which Bath would denounce as an act of poltroonery, the offspring of cowardice in Western? Was Fielding injudicious in exposing an English squire of that day to so abject an imputation? Sir W. Scott thought so; but it may be that Fielding wished to shew by a humorous satiric touch, that a blustering, overbearing person, with power in his hands, is not necessarily a man of unflinching courage, when, probably, loss of life may be the result of a hostile encounter. And how great is the discrimination shewn in the delineation of the whimsical character of Partridge, with his timidity and vain-gloriousness, his busy curiosity and untimely, boastful communicativeness, his affection for Jones, which, though true, perhaps, was deeply tinctured with the hues of complexional selfishness, the ludicrousness of his superstition, and the amusing drollery of his classic pedantry. And how naturally devised are those incidents which threaten to mar for ever the happy prospects of the virtuous and beautiful Fanny, and her devotedly-attached admirer Joseph Andrews, whose singularly virtuous dispositions stand out in striking contrast to the conceited frivolity and selfish viciousness of Beau Didapper, and the unseemly passion of Lady Booby.

How finely contrasted, also, are the characters of

the orthodox divine, Thwackum, with his uncharitable exclusiveness, and the philosopher Square, whose ideas of morality were grounded upon his notions of the opinions of Plato and Aristotle; while the meritoriousness of true good-nature, and the moral beauty of goodness, were things entirely overlooked in their angry polemical disputations! And how cheering it is to turn away from the repulsive, yet instructive, portrait of the canting, self-seeking Thwackum, in order to gaze for a moment upon that of Dr. Harrison, the warm-hearted, the beneficent, the brave, and the learned, whose unselfish and generous friendship for the charming Amelia affords a striking and salutary example of the happiness which attends the exercise of that noble attribute of the human mind, which 'droppeth as the 'gentle rain from heaven, upon the place beneath;' and which 'is twice blessed' for 'It blesseth him that 'gives and him that takes.' And it may here be averred, that few characters have been more abundantly endowed with that attribute, mercy, than Harry Fielding himself.

But of all the characters portrayed by the genius of Fielding, it is upon that of 'Tom Jones' that his literary immortality chiefly rests. But his generous spirit, were it possible for it to become cognizant of what happens in this world of ours, where he suffered so much, would be pained to find that the hero of his choice has failed to attract the favourable consideration of Thackeray, whose genius was akin to his own, and who has come forward heartily as, perhaps, the most brilliant of his eulogists.

It is true that the wantonness, wildness, and want

of caution of Tom Jones, to repeat the epithets respecting his hero used by Fielding himself, have drawn him into situations and actions by which his many noble and generous qualities are grievously sullied; namely, his disreputable acquaintance with Lady Bellaston, the scene at Upton with Mrs. Waters, and his reprehensible intercourse with Molly Seagrim. But yet it is obvious that he was, in all these instances, the pursued, and not the pursuer. And, moreover, it ought to be remembered to his credit, that he studiously kept aloof from Molly Seagrim when he felt that his heart had become the resting-place of the ardent and pure first love of his adorned and charming Sophia Western. And contemplate him when he found that Sophia was in London. He then had recourse to the most politic means which his friend Nightingale could devise, of extricating himself from the humiliating toils by which the sensual and unscrupulous Lady Bellaston had entrapped him. And did not he also disentangle himself from the alluring trammels of Mrs. Waters, in order, as soon as possible, to reach the fair object of his virtuous love. Still, it must be admitted that his having fallen into such vicious practices rendered him unworthy of the love of so beauteous and angelic a mind and form as Sophia was possessed of. But the early instances of his devoted heroism in her behalf would naturally be the forerunners of mutual attachment. And his generous, affectionate, unselfish nature would lead us to infer that their union would be crowned with unalloyed happiness and love. And the high-minded sense of gratitude so affectionately shewn, and unselfishly declared, by him

towards Allworthy, in most trying circumstances, when engaged in discourse at Gloucester with that bustling lawyer, Dowling, is a fair warrant for the future unbroken faithfulness of his love for Sophia.

And further, though Jones was characteristically susceptible of the charming influence of female beauty, and wanting in firmness to resist his susceptibility in such situations as the above, yet there is no instance of his having ever attempted to assail the bright sanctuary of virtuous innocence. That this was the true bent of his disposition is not only manifested through the whole course of his history, but is also shewn in the following words, where he urges his friend Nightingale to marry Miss Miller (the humble object of that young man's passionate admiration), notwithstanding the disparity of their social position; in order to save that unhappy girl from the state of humiliation to which his abandonment of her must soon have consigned her. 'And what,' replied Jones, 'is this world 'which you would be ashamed to face, but the vile, 'the foolish, and the profligate? Forgive me, if I 'say such a shame must proceed from false modesty, 'which always attends false honour as its shadow. 'But I am assured there is not a man of real sense 'and goodness in the world, who would not honour 'and applaud the action. But admit no other would, 'would not your own heart, my friend, applaud it? 'And do not the warm, rapturous sensations, which 'we feel from the consciousness of an honest, noble, 'generous, benevolent action, convey more delight to 'the mind than the undeserved praise of millions?'

And where can be found an instance of goodness of heart, and charitable forgiveness of temper, more genuine and unassuming than in Jones's conduct towards the highwayman who attempted to rob him at Highgate; and, when the admirably-devised incidents of the story—incidents as natural as they are unexpected—had again brought him in contact with that same man, what delight it must have given his generous heart to hear that poverty-stricken man, whose five children and wife were saved from starvation by the unselfish and fearless generosity of *Fielding's hero*,—to hear that unhappy man exclaim—'Oh, Sir! the little hearts 'which you have warmed had now been cold as ice 'without your assistance.' And when the grateful, poor man's cousin, the good Mrs. Miller, said, that 'She doubted not but such goodness would meet a 'glorious reward;' Jones answered, 'He had been 'sufficiently rewarded already. Your cousin's account, 'Madam,' said he, 'hath given me a sensation more 'pleasing than I have ever known. He must be a 'wretch who is unmoved at hearing such a story; 'how transporting then must be the thought of having 'happily acted a part in this scene! If there are men 'who cannot feel delight in giving happiness to others, 'I sincerely pity them, as they are incapable of tasting 'what is, in my opinion, a greater honour, a higher 'interest, and a sweeter pleasure, than the ambitious, 'the avaricious, or the voluptuous man can ever ob-'tain.'

But the character of hero, in any sense, is denied by Thackeray to this inimitable offspring of Fielding's

genius. For he says, 'I protest against Mr. Thomas 'Jones holding such rank at all. I protest against 'his being considered a more than ordinary young 'fellow, ruddy-cheeked, broad-shouldered, and fond of 'wine and pleasure. *He would not rob a church, but 'that is all,*'—and, even with regard to Blifil and Jones, it is, in his opinion, a debatable question as to which of them 'is the worst member of society, and 'the most deserving of censure.'

Surely, it is not presumptuous to say that this opinion of Thackeray's is palpably groundless. Can revengeful malignity and sanctimonious hypocrisy be placed in the same category with unselfish generosity; especially when that noble quality is exhibited in its various phases? And when that distinguished humorist and excellent man says, 'I am angry with Jones,' we cannot suppose that this *anger* was intrinsically like the *aversion* he must have felt for the ignoble disposition of Blifil. Is it not, on the contrary, more likely to have taken fast hold of his mind, owing to regret at seeing one, endowed by nature with so much heroic enthusiasm in the relief of poverty and suffering, as Jones undoubtedly was, brought by his own imprudence and want of circumspection, for a while at least, to a situation, perilous in the extreme, and almost hopeless. Anger, arising from such a source, would naturally be allied with sympathy for misfortunes, which, in reality, were brought upon Jones by the intriguing wiles of others; but the causes of which were not, in the first instance, of his own seeking.

And farther, Thackeray says, somewhat grudgingly: 'Too much of the plum-cake and rewards of life 'fall to that boisterous, swaggering young scapegrace. 'Sophia actually surrenders without a proper sense of 'decorum, the fond, foolish, palpitating little creature.'

Is this the proper inference to draw from Sophia's dialogue with Allworthy, where she emphatically tells him that she can never give her consent to the good man's proposal of her marriage with Jones; and where we find that she is also deaf to the entreaty of Jones himself, the man she loves so dearly: even though his addresses were then sanctioned by her fond, but despotic father. And, again, though Jones was possessed of high animal spirits and manly courage, there is nothing in his conduct and manners which sanctions the appropriateness of the disparaging epithets by which he is marked in the foregoing quotation. On the contrary, his conversations with Mr. Allworthy respecting Blifil evince the presence of a most generous and forgiving temper, as well as a judgment at once ripe and benevolently considerate. Surely a character, endowed with such high qualities, and so entirely unselfish, ought not to be thus deprecated and almost ignored, because of the immoral course into which such a character was, for a while, drawn by the allurements of womankind; especially when it is found that the wretchedness to which Jones was reduced by the vile machinations of the temptress, whom he had abandoned, owing to the purifying influence of his love for the beautiful and virtuous Sophia Western, is likely to act as a salutary warning to persons of generous

minds against yielding to such temptations. And that this was the expectation of Fielding himself is unaffectedly and feelingly told in his great novel, as follows: 'The foibles and vices of men,' says he, 'in 'whom there is great mixture of good, become more 'glaring objects from the virtues which contrast them, 'and shew their deformity; and when we find such 'vices attended with their evil consequences to our 'favourite characters, we are not only taught to shun 'them for our own sake, but to hate them for the 'mischief they have already brought on those we love.' Such, evidently, was the moral result which the author of 'Tom Jones' had in view when he composed that 'exquisite picture of human life and manners;' that 'Prose Epic of Human Nature.'

And such seemed to be the expectation of Coleridge, when he says of 'Tom Jones:' 'I do not speak of 'young women; but a young man, whose heart and 'feelings can be injured, or even his passions excited 'by this novel, is already thoroughly corrupt. There 'is a cheerful, sunshiny, breezy spirit that prevails 'everywhere, strongly contrasted with the close but 'day-dreamy continuity of Richardson;' and he loathes the cant which can recommend 'Pamela' and 'Clarissa 'Harlowe' as moral, and condemn 'Tom Jones' as loose. But it does not follow that because there are indelicacies to be met with in the former, those of the latter should be deemed inoffensive and harmless. And it is to be regretted that, owing to such passages, one of the completest and most instructive of these pictures of human character and manners, ever drawn by the

pen of genius, should have to be excluded from the gaze of youthful, and especially feminine modesty. But are the pure-minded and well-disposed amongst our youths really liable to have their characters injuriously affected by the perusal of this matchless novel of our 'Immortal Fielding,' as he is emphatically styled by the equally immortal Gibbon? Surely, it is not in the nature of things that such would be the case. He that is noble, pure, and generous of heart must love what resembles himself. Such a one would, therefore, instinctively sympathise with the beneficent qualities of Fielding's hero; while he would be apt to look with sorrow, and even aversion, upon the faults, or vices, which tarnished, for a while, such fine dispositions, and exposed their imprudent possessor to harassing misfortunes. And again, would not a young man who is disposed to pursue sensual pleasures, even if gifted with only a moderate share of prudence and moral instinct, be forcibly admonished by the heartrending and perilous nature of those misfortunes to avoid being ensnared by the seductive causes which are sure to lead to them? And that such was the happy result intended and hoped for by Fielding himself will appear manifest enough in the following quotation from 'Tom 'Jones.' After alluding to 'the mighty events that 'will be hereafter contained in this history, and to 'which it must be confessed the unfortunate lad, by 'his own wantonness, wildness, and want of caution, 'too much contributed,' he says, 'In recording some instances of these, we shall, if rightly understood, 'afford a very useful lesson to those well disposed

'youths who shall hereafter be our readers, for they 'may here find that goodness of heart and openness 'of temper, though these may give them great comfort 'within, and administer to an honest pride in their own 'minds, will by no means, alas! do their business in 'the world. Prudence and circumspection are necessary 'even to the best of men. They are indeed, as it were, 'a guard to virtue, without which she can never be 'safe. It is not enough that your designs, nay that 'your actions, are intrinsically good, you must take care 'they shall appear so. If your inside be never so 'beautiful, you must preserve a fair outside also. This 'must be constantly looked to, or malice and envy 'will take care to blacken it so that the sagacity and 'goodness of an Allworthy will not be able to see 'through it, and discern the beauties within. Let this, 'my young readers, be your constant maxim, that 'no man can be good enough to enable him to neglect 'the rules of prudence, nor will virtue herself look 'beautiful, unless she be bedecked with the outward 'ornaments of decency and decorum. And this pre-'cept, my worthy disciples, if you read with due atten-'tion, you will I hope find sufficiently enforced by 'examples in the following pages.' And, with a prescient sense of the probability of his intentions being misunderstood and possibly misrepresented to the detriment of his fair fame, he thus concludes. 'I ask 'pardon for this short appearance by way of chorus 'on the stage. It is in reality for my own sake, that 'while I am discovering the rocks on which innocence 'and goodness often split, I may not be misunderstood

'to recommend the very means to my worthy readers 'by which I intend to shew them they will be undone. 'And this, as I could not prevail on any of my actors 'to speak, I myself was obliged to declare.'

Such being the impellent motives of Fielding's genius, and so marked the sincerity of his enthusiasm in his efforts to instil into the soul of man the necessity of using graceful truthfulness and benevolent urbanity of manner in social intercourse, with detestation of all hypocritical dealing, it may with propriety be anticipated that this fine edition of his works will not fail to meet with such an amount of countenance from the educated classes, as will be a safe warrant to the publisher to follow up the works of Fielding with those of other great English writers of prose fiction, in a form equally attractive, and consonant with the exalted genius of the authors.

With this object kept strictly in view, it has been resolved upon to issue this edition in the octavo form. It is to be a revised reprint of the works of Fielding, published in 1821 by Rivington, and other leading booksellers of London, and, like that fine edition, it is to consist of ten volumes. But, though a reprint, it is not to be a *fac simile*, for the type of the new edition will be of a superior size and the page more expanded. It is well to state, also, that the edition of 1821 is a reprint of the original quarto edition of 1762, with Arthur Murphy's Essay on the Life and Genius of Fielding. Now, the scarcity of Rivington's edition, which has ceased to be met with in the market, can hardly fail to ensure for this the patronage of those

collectors who would naturally be ambitious of seeing their libraries adorned by the immortal writings of their renowned fellow-countryman.

And the value of this edition is enhanced by the presence of a very interesting pamphlet by Fielding which has never before appeared in any other collected edition of his works. It is entitled 'A clear state of 'the case of Elizabeth Canning, who hath sworn that 'she was robbed and almost starved to death by a 'gang of gypsies and other villains in January last, 'for which one Mary Squires now lies under sentence 'of death.' The original copy, which now lies before me, was published in 1753 by A. Millar of the Strand. It met with a very intemperate reply from a Dr. Hill, in which he treated Fielding with supercilious disrespect. But his answer was not at all of the convincing kind, for though he pointed triumphantly to the evidence he possessed of the innocence of Squires, yet he does not in this paper produce it. A cutting rejoinder by 'A Liveryman' is thought by some to be the production of Fielding himself. But that conjecture seems hardly credible; for in his 'Preface' to the Miscellanies, published in 1743, Fielding says, as has been already noticed, 'And I do further protest that I 'will never hereafter publish any book or pamphlet 'whatever to which I will not put my name.' His connection with the *True Patriot*, the *Jacobite*, and *Covent Garden Journal* in 1745-48 and '52, would, to be sure, lead one to suppose that he might have been goaded by his abusive assailants to break through the above promise. But as there can be no doubt

that his alliance with those papers was a matter of public notoriety, his contributions to them cannot well be deemed anonymous. And when it is seen that Fielding made it a stringent rule studiously to abstain from singling out individuals as objects of satirical denunciation—a resolution which he strictly observed in the case of his rival Richardson—there is afforded a sufficient warrant for not admitting this letter of a 'Liveryman' into the works of Fielding.

The foregoing remarks upon the disposition and genius of Fielding will not, it is hoped, be deemed superfluous, notwithstanding the presence of Arthur Murphy's able and critical essay; since it is deemed right to strive, ingenuously, to disarm, or, at all events, to conciliate prejudices, which passages in the novels of this great writer, though written in the spirit of the times he lived in, are now likely to create.

But it has already been inferred that such passages were the offspring of the necessity Fielding felt himself under of faithfully depicting the manners of his contemporaries, with the view of rendering vice and hypocrisy the more detestable by exposing them in all their naked deformity; as well as by contrast the more effectually to portray, in conspicuous and attractive colours, the charms of virtue and the consolations of religion. And here may be called to mind that pious and philosophic remark of his with regard to the comfort attendant upon virtue, even when suffering under adverse and perilous circumstances. For virtue, or 'that mental quality which is as interested in pur-'suing the good of others as its own,' was not, he

thought, always 'the surest way to human happiness:' because, says he, 'I am afraid we must then include 'poverty and contempt, with all the mischiefs which 'backbiting, envy, and ingratitude, can bring on man-'kind, in our idea of happiness.' Nor did he think it was a Christian doctrine. On the contrary, he looked upon it as 'destructive of one of the noblest argu-'ments that reason alone can furnish for the belief 'in immortality.'

Such being the predominant characteristics of Fielding's mind, and such the praiseworthy end to which the efforts of his genius were energetically directed, it may with confidence be averred, that as well might a few unseemly spots, to be found on the bright page of Shakespeare himself, be taken for a total obliteration of its unapproached and perhaps for ever unapproachable luminousness; or as well might we be expected to renounce the life-inspiring attributes of the sun, because his benignant rays may be partially obscured by some dark spots upon his glowing orb, as that Fielding, and other great geniuses of England, should be repudiated on account of some coarse and indelicate passages in their works. The necessity of using the style of talk adopted to the character and rank of the speaker, under which such leading spirits of their times, and indeed of all time, as Fielding and Chaucer, for instance, lay is accounted for and excused by the latter where he introduces 'the Miller's Tale.'

'What should I more say, but this millere
'He n'old his words for no man forbare,

'But told his charle's* tale in his mannere;
'Methinketh that I shall rehearse it here:
'And, therefore, every gentle wight I pray
'For Goddes love, as deem not that I say
'Of evil intent, but that I mote rehearse
'Their tales all, al be they better or worse,
'Or else falsen some of my mattere:
'And, therefore, who so listeth not to hear,
'Turn over the leaf and chese † another tale;
'For he shall find enow, both great and small,
'Of storial thing that toucheth gentleness,
'And eke morality and holiness.'

To these lines of Chaucer may be added what Sir Walter Scott says, in commenting upon these objectionable passages in Fielding's works, which are offensive to moral sensitiveness. 'Let it not be supposed,' says Sir Walter, 'that we are indifferent to morality, 'because we treat with scorn that affectation which, 'while in common life it connives at the open practice 'of libertinism, pretends to detest the memory of an 'author who painted life as it was, with all its shades, 'and more than all the lights which it occasionally 'exhibits to relieve them. For particular passages of 'the work (Tom Jones), the author can only be de-'fended under the custom of the age, which permitted 'in certain cases much stronger language than ours. 'He has himself said that there is nothing which can 'offend the chastest eye in the perusal, and he spoke, 'probably, according to the ideas of his time. But 'in modern estimation there are several passages at 'which delicacy may justly take offence; and we can 'only say, that they may be termed rather jocularly 'coarse than seductive, and that they are atoned for

* Churle. † Choose.

'by the admirable mixture of wit and argument, by 'which, in others, the cause of true religion and virtue 'is supported and advanced.'

It is very gratifying to me to find that the opinions regarding this point which are put forward in this Preface are in accordance with those which have emanated from so chaste and upright a mind as adorned the genius of Walter Scott; and to mark the estimation in which the genius of the author of 'Tom Jones,' 'Joseph Andrews,' and 'Amelia,' was held by the author of 'Waverley,' 'Ivanhoe,' and 'Kenilworth,' I shall close this Preface with the final paragraph of Scott's 'Life of Fielding.'

'Thus lived and thus died,' says Sir Walter Scott, 'at a period of life when the world might have ex-'pected continued delight from his matured powers, 'the celebrated Henry Fielding, the father of the 'English novel; and in his powers of strong and 'national humour, and forcible yet natural exhibition of 'character, unapproached, as yet, even by his successful 'followers.' *

J. P. BROWNE, M.D.

Chelsea.

* It is proper to notice here that throughout this edition the word *beau* is spelt *beaus* in the plural; because that is the method of spelling used in the works of Fielding, published by A. Millar in the author's lifetime; and, consequently, it is to be presumed with his sanction. This mode is followed in the edition of 1822 (founded upon that of 1762), with very few exceptions; so few, indeed, that they would seem rather to confirm than to amend it. And when it is called to mind that the use of the word, in the days of Fielding, had become so common, that it might be almost deemed indigenous, what could be more natural

N. B.—Since completing the edition of Fielding's prose works, the Publishers have decided to issue a supplementary volume containing the great author's poetical writings, together with his statement of the case of Elizabeth Canning; with the view that nothing of him may be lost.

This arrangement appears to the Publishers more desirable than that, as announced in the Preface, of incorporating 'Elizabeth Canning' with the author's other prose works.

The Publishers add that only a limited number of the supplementary volume will be printed.

than that its plural should be instinctively spelled with an English termination, even by such a master of the English language as he was.

There is a fact relating to that great orator and scholar, Lord Plunket, which bears directly upon this case; while, at the same time, it displays the ready wit of that most acute and profound logician. It happened that the celebrated Lord Avonmore, when he was Chief Baron of the Exchequer in Ireland, requested Plunket, then a young barrister, to draw out a deed for him. The latter did so; and so admirably was the task performed, that it elicited the high commendation of the veteran judge. 'But notwithstanding its excellence,' said his lordship, 'you have 'committed a blunder, Plunket, which surprises me, when coming from 'a scholar like you.' 'What is it, my lord?' said Plunket, hastily. 'Why,' replied Avonmore, 'you used *memorandums* instead of *memo-* '*randa*.' 'Oh!' said the future Lord Chancellor, 'I will change the word 'at once, my lord, if you are sure it is better English.'

J. P. B.

AN

ESSAY

ON

THE LIFE AND GENIUS

OF

HENRY FIELDING, ESQ.

To stand distinguished from the common race of mankind, and, by the efforts of extraordinary virtues breaking out into acts of magnanimity and public spirit, or by a vigorous exertion of the faculties of the mind, enriching human life with the invention of arts, or the graces of elegant composition; to attain that point of eminence, to which succeeding times shall look back with gratitude and admiration, is a lot assigned but to very few. The generality of people seem to be called into this world for no higher purposes than to breathe, to gaze at the sun, to eat and drink, to sleep and expire. When little more than a century has rolled away, and a whole generation of men have passed from nature to eternity, as the Poet solemnly expresses it, how few names, out

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of that wonderful multitude, stand recorded to posterity for any memorable performances, or any remarkable use made of their existence! Xerxes wept when he surveyed his millions round him, and reflected that, in the course of a few years, not one of them should remain upon the face of the earth; but the reflection grows still more gloomy, when it is considered how few of them were ever to be heard of again! It is a melancholy curiosity, to cast an eye through the columns of chronology, where the princes, heroes, patriots, legislators, philosophers, poets, historians, and artists, who have figured in the world since the creation almost to the present day, are all carefully preserved, and, like Egyptian kings, embalmed for the notice of mankind. How scanty the number! What a thrifty list does it afford us, when we compare it with those prodigious bills of mortality, which the perishing generations, of whom we only know that they lived and they died, have furnished forth for the space of 6000 years! It calls to our minds the battles recorded of Cyrus, Semiramis, and other eastern sovereigns, in which we only know that they led an astonishing number of millions to the field, and, almost all, sunk together into one undistinguished state of oblivion. Nor should this observation carry with it a satire upon the inactivity of mankind in general; for many, no doubt, who have not, to use Lord Verulam's expression, survived the weathers of time, employed themselves in a course of laudable industry, and used strenuous endeavours not to wear away their lives in silence, like the beasts of the field, prone to the earth, and subservient only to the excitements of appetite: but the small returns (if I may use a modern military phrase) of good and serviceable men, must not only be owing to the vicissitudes of human affairs, and the devastations of wars civil and religious, but also to

the arduous difficulty of serving mankind by public conduct, or performing any thing in the arts, either elegant or useful, and so bequeathing to posterity a lasting legacy.

To the number of those, who by the vigour of their talents, and the vivacity of their wit, seem to have enlarged the bounds prescribed, in the common course of things, to the memory of Man, and gained a passport to future ages, may be added the late HENRY FIELDING, whose works will be admired, while a taste of true humour remains in this country. The materials of his own monument he has left behind him, scattered indeed without arrangement, and dispersed about the world. These, in justice to so eminent an author, Mr. Millar has determined to collect together; that the Public may have, in one body, a good and valuable edition of writings, whose merit is so universally acknowledged.

IN the progress of this design, it naturally occurred, that our author would be followed by the same kind of curiosity, which ever attends on those, who have made themselves conspicuous in their time; which, with solicitude and an attachment to their memories, loves to inform itself of the minutest circumstances relating to them, where they were born, of what stature they were, of what temper of mind, what difficulties they met with in life, and with what disposition they met those difficulties, whether with despondency or fortitude, with gaiety or moroseness; what sort of companions they were; with other anecdotes of the same nature. That the generality of readers, even though our Author's memory is still recent in the minds of many, would expect to be gratified in these particulars, was a very obvious remark; and therefore it was resolved to prefix to this edition an Essay on the Life and Genius of Henry Fielding.

In complying with this usual demand of the curious, it is not the intention of the present writer to disturb the Manes of the dead, as has been practised by certain biographers; to insult his memory with an unnecessary detail of his distresses, and the actions which resulted from them: to infer the character of his heart from the overflowings of sudden and momentary passions; to tear off ungenerously the shroud from his remains, and pursue him with a cruelty of narrative, till the reader's sense is shocked, and is forced to express his horror, like Virgil's Æneas, when he meets, in the regions of the dead, the shade of his mangled friend:

> *Deiphobe armipotens, genus alto à sanguine Teucri,*
> *Quis tam crudeles optavit sumere pœnas?*
> *Cui tantum de te licuit?*

It will, it is hoped, be sufficient for the reader's curiosity, if the principal features of his mind are here delineated; if his temper is shewn, as much of it, at least, as he transfused into his writings; if some account be given of his family, and of the various situations in life which his fortune allotted him. For more than this, the author of this little tract has determined not to ransack; for it is not the entire history of the man, but the memoirs of an author, which he proposes to offer to the Public.

Henry Fielding was born at Sharpham Park, in Somersetshire, near Glastonbury, April 22, 1707. His father, Edmund Fielding, served in the wars under the Duke of Marlborough, and arrived to the rank of Lieutenant-General, at the latter end of George I. or the beginning of George II. He was grandson to an Earl of Denbigh; nearly related to the Duke of Kingston, and many other noble and respectable families. His mother

was daughter of Judge Gold, the grandfather of the present Sir Henry Gold, one of the Barons of the Exchequer. By these his parents he had* four sisters, Catharine, Ursula, Sarah, and Beatrice; and one brother, Edmund, who was an officer in the marine service. Sarah Fielding, his third sister, is well known to the literary world, by the proofs she has given of a lively and penetrating genius, in many elegant performances, particularly DAVID SIMPLE, and the letters, which she afterwards published, between the characters introduced, into that work. The reader will see a very just criticism on these performances, at the end of the fifth volume of these works; where, though the affection of the brother appears, yet the author shows himself the friend of truth as well as his sister. Our Author's mother having paid her debt to nature, Lieutenant-General Fielding married a second time, and the issue of that marriage were six sons, George, James, Charles, John, William, and Basil, all dead excepting John, who is at present in the commission of the peace for the counties of Middlesex, Surry, Essex, and the Liberties of Westminster, and has lately been raised to the honour of knighthood by his Majesty, in reward of that zeal and spirited assiduity, with which he serves his country, as a public magistrate.

HENRY FIELDING received the first rudiments of his education at home, under the care of the Rev. Mr. Oliver, to whom, we may judge, he was not under any considerable obligations from the very humorous and striking portrait, given of him afterwards, under the name of parson Trulliber, in *Joseph Andrews*. From Mr. Oliver's care, our Author was removed to Eton

* It was remarked by one of the journals of the time, that this is rather an odd expression.

School, where he had the advantage of being early known to many of the first people in the kingdom, namely, Lord Lyttelton, Mr. Fox, Mr. Pitt, Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, and the late Mr. Winnington, &c. At this great seminary of education Henry Fielding gave distinguishing proofs of strong and peculiar parts; and when he left the place, he was said to be uncommonly versed in the Greek authors, and an early master of the Latin classics; for both which he retained a strong admiration in all the subsequent passages of his life. Thus accomplished, he went from Eton to Leyden*, and there continued to shew an eager thirst for knowledge, and to study the civilians with a remarkable application for about two years, when, remittances failing, he was obliged to return to London, not then quite twenty years old.

It is to be lamented, that an excellent course of education was thus interrupted; as there is no manner of doubt, but, with such excellent endowments from nature as he certainly possessed, he might, by continuance at a seat of learning, have laid in a much ampler store of knowledge, and have given such a complete improvement to his talents, as might afterwards have shone forth with still greater lustre in his writings; not to mention that, in a longer and more regular course of study, he might have imbibed such deep impressions of an early virtue, as would have made him less accessible afterwards to those allurements of pleasure, which, though they could not suppress the exertion of his genius, yet retarded its true vigour, and, like clouds around the sun, made it seem to struggle with opposing difficulties, instead of

* He studied at Leyden under the celebrated Vitriarius, then professor of Civil Law in the University, and author of 'Institutiones 'Juris Naturæ et Gentium,' 1719, 8vo. Biog. Brit. vol. vii. Sup. C.

throwing out at once a warm, an equal, and an intense heat. At this period, however, our Author had provided himself with a fund of more solid learning, than usually is the portion of persons of his age; and his mind was at least so seasoned with literature, that, amidst his wildest dissipations afterwards, nothing could subdue the love of reading which he had so early contracted. It appears, from a preface to one of his plays, that he had conceived an early inclination for dramatic composition; the comedy, called Don Quixotte in England, having made part of his literary amusement at Leyden; though, by his own account, it should seem that what he executed of it there, was little more than his canvas in a more advanced age, when he gave it to the stage with additional strokes of humour, and higher colourings than his inexperience had bestowed upon it at first. The play contains a true vein of good sense and satire, though his usual hurry in the production of his pieces did not afford him leisure, when he once determined to offer it to the public, to give it all the dramatic finishings requisite in a complete piece. Mr. Fielding's case was generally the same with that of the poet described by *Juvenal;* with a great genius, he must have starved, if he had not sold his performance to a favourite actor.

Esurit, intactam Paridi nisi vendit Agaven.

To the same motive we must ascribe the multiplicity of his plays, and the great rapidity with which they were produced; for we find that, though such a writer as Mr. Congreve was content, in his whole life to produce four comedies and one tragedy, yet the exigence of our Author's affairs required at his hand no less than eight entire plays, besides fifteen farces, or pieces of a subordinate nature. It has been often a matter of wonder

that he, who most undoubtedly possessed a vein of true and genuine humour, should not have proved more successful in his theatrical productions; that is to say, should not, in some legitimate comedy, have discovered the future father of JOSEPH ANDREWS, TOM JONES, and AMELIA. This, however, from what has been premised, seems pretty fairly accounted for; but yet, for the real cause of this inequality, we must still go somewhat deeper than this remark, which lies too palpable upon the surface of things. The inquiry may, perhaps, not be incurious; and it shall be pursued in its due place, when we come to analyse his genius, and determine its nature and quality.

AT the age of twenty years, or thereabout, Henry Fielding returned from Leyden to London; in the fullest vigour of constitution, which was remarkably strong, and patient of fatigue; still unshaken by excesses of pleasure, and unconquered by midnight watchings, till frequent returns of the gout attacked him with a severity that made him, in the latter part of his days, a melancholy repentant for the too free indulgences of his youth; and drove him at length to Lisbon, in the hopes of lingering a little longer in life. From the account of his voyage to that place, we may judge of the activity of his mind, and the strenuous flow of his spirits, which, under a complication of infirmities, could yet prompt him to the exercise of his wit, and the sallies of his imagination. What then must have been the gaiety and quickness of his fancy, when his strength was yet unimpaired by illness, and, when young in life, curiosity was eager to know the world, and his passions were ready to catch at every hook pleasure had baited for them? It is no wonder that, thus formed and disposed for enjoyment, he launched wildly into a career of dissi-

pation. Though under age, he found himself his own master, and in London: *Hoc fonte derivata clades!* From that source flowed all the inconveniences that attended him throughout the remainder of his life. The brilliancy of his wit, the vivacity of his humour, and his high relish of social enjoyment, soon brought him into high request with the men of taste and literature, and with the voluptuous of all ranks; to the former he was ever attentive, and gladly embraced all opportunities of associating with them; if the latter often ensnared him, and won from him too great a portion of his time, it cannot be wondered at, considering the greenness of his years, the sensibility of his temper, and the warmth of his imagination. His finances were not answerable to the frequent draughts made upon him by the extravagance which naturally followed. He was allowed two hundred pounds a-year by his father, which, as he himself used to say, 'any body might pay that would.'

The fact was, General Fielding, with very good inclinations to support his son in the handsomest manner, very soon found it impracticable to make such appointments for him as he could have wished. He had married again soon after the death of our Author's mother, and had so large an increase of family, and that too so quick, that, with the necessary demands of his station for a genteel and suitable expence, he could not spare out of his income any considerable disbursements for the maintenance of his eldest son. Of this truth Henry Fielding was sensible, and he was therefore, in whatever difficulties he might be involved, never wanting in filial piety, which, his nearest relations agree, was a shining part of his character. By difficulties his resolution was never subdued; on the contrary, they only roused him to struggle through them with a peculiar spirit and magnanimity. When he

advanced a little more in life, and his commerce with mankind became enlarged, disappointments were observed by his acquaintance to provoke him into an occasional peevishness, and severity of animadversion. This, however, had not a tendency to embitter his mind, or to give a tinge to his general temper; which was remarkably gay, and for the most part overflowing into wit, mirth, and good-humour. As he disdained all littleness of spirit, wherever he met with it in his dealings with the world, his indignation was apt to rise; and as he was of a penetrating discernment, he could always develope selfishness, mistrust, pride, avarice, interested friendship, the ungenerous, and the unfeeling temper, however plausibly disguised; and as he could read them to the bottom, so he could likewise assault them with the keenest strokes of spirited and manly satire. Amongst the many fine traits of description in that character, which TACITUS has left us of AGRICOLA, there is a very delicate touch, which occurs to me at present, and seems applicable to the temper of our Author; his reproof was sometimes thought to carry with it a degree of asperity; as to the good and amiable he was polite, to the unworthy he was rather harsh; but his anger once vented, there remained no trace of it; from his secrecy and silence you had nothing to apprehend. *Apud quosdam acerbior in conviciis narrabatur; ut bonis comis, ita adversus malos injucundus. Ceterùm ex iracundia nihil supererat: secretum & silentium ejus non timeres.* Disagreeable impressions never continued long upon his mind; his imagination was fond of seizing every gay prospect, and, in his worst adversities, filled him with sanguine hopes of a better situation. To obtain this, he flattered himself that he should find his resources in his wit and invention, and accordingly he commenced a writer for the stage in the year 1727, being then about twenty years of age.

His first dramatic piece soon after adventured into the world, and was called *Love in several Masques.* It immediately succeeded the *Provoked Husband*, a play, which, as our Author observes, for the continued space of twenty-eight nights, received as great and as just applauses, as ever were bestowed on the English stage. '*These*,' says Mr. Fielding, '*were difficulties, which seemed rather to* '*require the superior force of a Wycherley or a Congreve*, '*than a raw and unexperienced pen* (*for I believe I may* '*boast that none ever appeared so early upon the stage*).' Notwithstanding these obstacles, the play, we find, was favourably received: and, considering that it was his first attempt, it had, no doubt, the marks of promising genius. His second play, the *Temple Beau*, appeared the year after, and contains a great deal of spirit and real humour. Perhaps, in those days, when audiences were in the æra of delicate and higher comedy, the success of this piece was not very remarkable; but surely pieces of no very superior merit have drawn crowded houses within our own memory, and have been attended with a brilliancy of success; not but it must be acknowledged that the picture of a Temple Rake, since exhibited by the late Dr. Hoadly in the *Suspicious Husband*, has more of what the *Italians* call Fortunato, than can be allowed to the careless and hasty pencil of Mr. *Fielding*. It would lead a great way from the intention of this Essay, should we attempt to analyse the several dramatic compositions of this author; and indeed, as he confessedly did not attain to pre-eminence in this branch of writing, at least was unequal to his other productions, it may be sufficient to observe, that from the year 1727 to the end of 1736, almost all his plays and farces were written; not above two or three having appeared since that time; so that he produced about eighteen theatrical performances, plays and farces included, before he was quite thirty years old. No selection has been made

of those pieces; but they are all printed together in this edition, that the public might have the *entire theatre* of Henry Fielding. For though it must be acknowledged that in the whole collection there are few plays likely to make any considerable figure on the stage hereafter, yet they are worthy of being preserved, being the works of a genius, who, in his wildest and most inaccurate productions, yet occasionally displays the talent of a master. Though in the plan of his pieces he is not always regular, yet is he often happy in his diction and style; and, in every groupe that he has exhibited, there are to be seen particular delineations that will amply recompense the attention bestowed upon them. The comedy of the *Miser*, which he has mostly taken from Molière, has maintained its ground upon the stage ever since it was first performed, and has the value of a copy from a great painter by an eminent hand. If the comedy of *Pasquin* were restored to the stage, it would perhaps be a more favourite entertainment with our audiences than the much admired *Rehearsal;* a more rational one it certainly would be, as it would undoubtedly be better understood. The Rehearsal, at present, seems to be received rather from prescription than any real delight it affords: it was the work of a noble wit; and the object of its satire was one of the greatest geniuses of this nation, the immortal Dryden. These two circumstances gave the play a wonderful *éclat* on its first appearance; and the wit and humour of the parodies were undoubtedly very high-flavoured. But has it not lost its relish at present? and does not the whole appear a wild *caricatura*, which very few can refer to any original objects? However, its traditional fame still procures for it a fashionable prejudice in its favour; and for the sake of having the favourite actor, who performs the part of *Bayes*, continually before the

eye, we crowd to it still, whenever it is acted, and we laugh, and applaud, and roar, and 'wonder with a fool-'ish face of praise.' What Mr. Dryden has said concerning this celebrated performance, is but a mild judgment from one, who might have used more exasperated language. 'I have answered not the Rehearsal,' says he, 'because I 'knew the author sat to himself, when he drew the picture, 'and was the very Bayes of his own farce. Because also 'I know that my betters were more concerned than I was 'in that satire; and, lastly, because Mr. Smith and Mr. 'Johnson, the main pillars of it, were two such languish-'ing gentlemen in their conversation, that I could liken 'them to nothing but their own relations, those noble 'characters of men of wit and pleasure about the town.'

But sense survived when merry jests were past, as his generous rival has sung since; and Dryden is now the admiration of his country. The Pasquin of *Fielding* came from the pen of an author in indigence; or, as the late *Colley Cibber* has contumeliously called him, a broken wit: and therefore, though its success was considerable, it never shone forth with a lustre equal to its merit; and yet it is a composition that would have done honour to the Athenian stage, when the Middle Comedy, under the authority of the laws, made use of fictitious names to satirize vice and folly, however dignified by honours and employments. But the Middle Comedy did not flourish long at Athens; the archness of its aim, and the poignancy of its satire, soon became offensive to the officers of state; a law was made to prohibit those oblique strokes of wit, and the Comic Muse was restrained from all indulgences of personal satire, however humorously drawn, under the appearance of imaginary characters. The same fate attended the use of the Middle Comedy in England; and it is said that the wit and humour of our Modern *Aristophanes*, Mr. Fielding, whose quarry, in some of his pieces,

particularly the *Historical Register*, was higher game than in prudence he should have chosen, were principal instruments in provoking that law, under which the British theatre has groaned ever since. But the minister was sore, and in his resentment he struck too deep a blow. Had he considered that, by the bill, which afterwards passed into a law, he was entailing slavery on the Muses, and that a time might come, when all dramatic genius should thereby be led a vassal in the train of the managers of the theatre, to be graciously fostered or haughtily oppressed, according to their caprice and prejudice; perhaps, then, as he was himself of a large and comprehensive understanding, and possessed, besides, the virtues of humanity, he might have been contented with milder restrictions, and not have made the remedy almost worse than the disease. But licentiousness was to be retrenched, and liberty received a stab in the operation: luxuriant branches that were extravagant in their growth were to be lopped away; and, to make short work of it, the woodman in a fit of anger applied his axe to the root of the tree. The tree, it is true, is not quite fallen to the ground; but it is grown sapless, withered, and unproductive; its annual fruits want the high flavour, which they might have in a more generous nursery; no woodnotes wild are heard from its branches, and it is exactly in the state described by *Lucan:*

*Trunco, non frondibus, efficit umbram.**

But it may be asked, are the players to be judges of the king's ministers? Shall grimace and mimicry attack

* What precedes and follows this curious imagery was the cant of the green-room and of Grub street, at the time of passing the very salutary act for restraining the licentiousness of the stage, and was probably not quite out of fashion when Mr. Murphy wrote this Life; but it is rather singular that an author of so much

the most exalted characters? and must the great officers of state be, at the mercy of the actors, exhibited on the public stage? Why no;—except in a coronation, I think his Majesty's servants should not be made ridiculous; and the dangerous tendency of this buffooning kind of humour

taste, and so highly favoured by the public on account of his dramatic productions, should not have been convinced by experience that these complaints were utterly destitute of all reasonable foundation. He appears, however, desirous to represent his friend as a martyr to liberty, and is unwilling to lose the benefit of those specious arguments which his imagination had suggested, and which were very popular at the time he wrote, however opposite to the share he took in political controversy. 'The true idea of liberty,' he informs us, 'consists in the free and unlimited power of doing whatever shall 'not injure the civil and religious institutions of the state, nor be 'deemed invasive of the peace and welfare of our fellow-subjects; but,' he adds, 'dramatic authors are so circumstanced at present that this 'invaluable blessing is withdrawn from them.' If this means anything, it means that dramatic authors are deprived of the power of doing whatever shall not injure the civil and religious institutions of the state, &c., an absurdity too gross for assertion or belief, and yet the only inference that can be drawn. As we proceed, we find him plunging into another inconsistency. He observes that the Greek lawgivers, 'when they resolved to give a check to indecorum, left a 'free and unbounded scope to the *New Comedy*, which consisted in 'agreeable and lively representations of manners, passions, virtues, 'vices, and follies, from the general volume of Nature, without giving 'to any part of the transcript the peculiar marks or singularities of any 'individual.' Have the English lawgivers, we may surely ask, taken away this 'free and unbounded scope?' But without further exposing the many contradictions in this lamentation over the enslaved Muses, it may be sufficient, in point of fact, to state that, at the time the licencing act was passed, the immorality of the drama was notorious, and the most indecent, seditious, and blasphemous pieces were performed, and resorted to with incredible eagerness. The bill for the repression of these abuses in dramatic representations was accordingly introduced, and no trace of opposition, excepting the speech of LORD CHESTERFIELD, is to be found in the periodical publications of the times, which are filled with accounts of the other debates. It is also certain that not a single petition was presented

is strongly marked by a learned writer,* when he observes that 'this weapon, in the dissolute times of Charles II., 'completed the ruin of the best minister of that age. The 'historians tell us that Chancellor Hyde was brought into 'His Majesty's contempt by this court argument. They 'mimicked his walk and gesture with a fire-shovel and 'bellows for the mace and purse. Thus, it being the 'representation, and not the object represented, which 'strikes the fancy, vice and virtue must fall indifferently 'before it.'

If such were the effects of private mimicry, public drolls would undoubtedly be found of more pernicious consequence. Away with them, therefore; they are illiberal, they are unworthy; let licentiousness be banished from the theatres, but let the liberty of the free-born

against it, and not a single division appears in the journals of either house. Striking proofs, says Mr. Coxe, if any were still wanting, to show the general opinion in favour of its necessity. It is most probable that Lord Chesterfield alone spoke against the bill, and that his speech, so deservedly admired, has been repeated by subsequent writers, who copy each other, until a violent opposition to the measure has been supposed, which never existed. The whole of Mr. Coxe's account of this bill, in his 'Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole,' will show the inconsistency and absurdity of the declamation in our Author on this subject.—The last century presented two grand checks to the immorality and licentiousness of the stage; the one was brought about by the single efforts of Jeremy Collier; and the other by the Act of Parliament just mentioned; and in both cases the dramatic writers were the only complainants, while the public rejoiced that their favourite entertainment might be visited with safety to morals and character; and that the mirth of the evening was no longer to be interrupted by such confusion and riot as the introduction of political sentiments and prejudices must unavoidably occasion in a mixed assembly. C.

* The author of the Divine Legation of Moses.

Muse be immortal! The true idea of liberty consists in the free and unlimited power of doing whatever shall not injure the civil and religious institutions of the state, nor be deemed invasive of the peace and welfare of our fellow-subjects; but dramatic authors are so circumstanced at present, that this invaluable blessing is withdrawn from them; the Muses are enslaved in a land of liberty; and this at least should excuse the poets of the age for not rising to nobler heights, till the weight is taken off, which now depresses their strongest efforts. It must be allowed that, in restraining the licentiousness of the theatre, our legislature very wisely imitated the good sense of the Athenian magistracy, who by law interdicted the freedoms of the MIDDLE COMEDY; but it is to be wished that they had also imitated the moderation of the Greek lawgivers, who, when they resolved to give a check to indecorum, yet left a free and unbounded scope to the *New Comedy*, which consisted in agreeable and lively representations of manners, passions, virtues, vices, and follies, from the general volume of Nature, without giving to any part of the transcript the peculiar marks or singularities of any individual. Thus poets were only hindered from being libellers, but were left in full possession of useful and general satire, and all avenues of access to the Public were generously thrown open to them. As we have at present the happiness of living in a reign, when Majesty condescends to look with a favourable aspect on the liberal arts, many are sanguine enough to entertain hopes that the Muse may be released from her fetters, and restored to the free exercise of the amiable part of her province. When a bee has been deprived of its noxious sting, it may be safely permitted to rove at large among all the flowers of a garden; and it will be no inconsiderable addition to the lustre of the crown, if, with an AUGUSTAN REIGN of equity, moderation, victory, and wisdom, which

every Briton promises himself, there be also revived an AUGUSTAN AGE OF LETTERS.

THOUGH the foregoing observations may appear digressive from the main design of this Essay, yet, as the subject is important, and took its rise in a great measure from the writings of Mr. Fielding, to advert awhile to the consequences which flowed to the community from his actions, cannot be deemed altogether impertinent. It is only like going out of the way a little, to trace a rivulet in its progress, to mark its windings, to observe whether it bestows fertility on the neighbouring meadows, and then, returning to the straight road, to pursue the regular track of the journey.

IN the comedy called *Rape upon Rape*, or *The Coffee-house Politician*, we have an admirable draught of a character very common in this country, namely, a man who is smitten with an insatiable thirst for news, and concerns himself more about the balance of power than of his books. The folly of these statesmen out of place is there exhibited with a masterly ridicule; and indeed, in all the plays of our Author, however in some respects deficient, there are strokes of humour, and half-length paintings, not excelled by some of the ablest artists. The farces written by Mr. Fielding were almost all of them very successful, and many of them are still acted every winter with a continuance of approbation. They were generally the production of two or three mornings, so great was his facility in writing; and, to this day, they bear frequent repetition, at least as well as any other pieces of the kind. It need not be observed, in justification of their being preserved in this collection of more important works, that Farce is deemed by our best critics an appendage of the theatre, as well as pieces

of a higher nature. A learned and excellent critic * has given it a full consideration, in his *Dissertation on the several Provinces of the Drama.* 'The representations,' says he, 'of common Nature may either be taken ac-'curately, so as to reflect a *faithful and exact image* of 'their original, which alone is *that* I would call COMEDY; 'or they may be forced and overcharged above the simple 'and just proportions of *Nature*; as when the excesses 'of a *few* are given for *standing* characters; when not 'the man (in *general*) but the *passion* is described; or 'when, in the draught of the man, the leading *feature* is 'extended beyond measure; and, in these cases, the re-'presentation holds of the province of Farce.'

THESE remarks, from the pen of so accurate and sensible a writer, will evince that our Author's farces very justly make a part of this edition. The mock tragedy of TOM THUMB is replete with as fine parody as perhaps, has ever been written: the LOTTERY, the INTRIGUING CHAMBER MAID, and the VIRGIN UNMASKED, besides the real entertainment they afford, had, on their first appearance, this additional merit, that they served to make early discoveries of that true comic genius, which was then dawning forth in Mrs. Clive; which has since unfolded itself to a fulness of perfection: and continues to this day to be one of the truest ornaments of the stage. As this excellent actress received great advantages from the opportunities Mr. Fielding's pen afforded her; so he, in his turn, reaped the fruits of success from her abilities; and accordingly we find him acknowledging it, in a very handsome letter addressed to her, and prefixed to the INTRIGUING CHAMBERMAID: such a testimony of her merit, as it conduced to advance her progress, so it now will

* The Rev. Mr. Hurd, now Bishop of Worcester.

serve to perpetuate her fame; being enrolled in the records of a genius, whose works will be long admired: '*I cannot help reflecting*,' says our Author, '*that the town* '*has one obligation to me, who made the first discovery of* '*your great capacity, and brought you earlier forward on* '*the theatre, than the ignorance of some, and the envy of* '*others, would have otherwise permitted. I shall not here* '*dwell on any thing so well known as your theatrical merit;* '*which one of the finest judges, and the greatest man of* '*his age, hath acknowledged to exceed in humour that of* '*any of your predecessors in his time.*' If this remark was true thirty years ago, it may be added, to her honour, that she hath not been eclipsed by any, who have entered into the service of the Comic Muse since that time.*

As this Essay promises to treat of the genius, as well as the life, of Henry Fielding, it may not be improper to pause here for an enquiry into his talents; though we are not arrived at that period of his life, when they displayed themselves in their full warmth and splendour. And here it is necessary to caution the reader not to confine his idea of what is intended by the word *genius*, to any one single faculty of the mind; because it is observable that many mistakes have arisen, even among writers of penetrating judgment, and well versed in critical learning, by hastily attaching themselves to an imperfect notion of this term, so common in literary dissertations. That invention is the first great leading talent of a poet, has been a point long since determined;

* This lively actress retired from the stage in 1769, and passed the rest of her life in the society of a few select friends, at her small but elegant cottage, near Strawberry-hill; she died at this place, Dec. 6, 1785, and was buried in Twickenham church. On her monument are some affectionate lines, written by Miss Pope, who was brought up by Mrs. Clive. C.

because it is principally owing to that faculty of the mind, that he is able to create, and be as it were a MAKER; which is implied in his original title, given to him by the consent of Greece. But surely there are many other powers of the mind, as fully essential to constitute a fine poet; and therefore, in order to give the true character of any author's abilities, it should seem necessary to come to a right understanding of what is meant by GENIUS, and to analyse and arrange its several qualities. This once adjusted, it might prove no unpleasing task to examine what are the specific qualities of any poet in particular: to point out the talents of which he seems to have the freest command, or in the use of which he seems, as it were, to be lefthanded. In this plain fair-dealing way, the true and real value of an author will be easily ascertained: whereas, in the more confined method of investigation, which establishes, at the outset, one giant quality, and, finding the object of the inquiry deficient in that, immediately proceeds to undervalue him in the whole, there seems to be danger of not trying his cause upon a full and equitable hearing. Thus, I think, a late celebrated poet is likely to suffer an unjust sentence from a gentleman who has already obliged the Public with the first volume of an Essay on his Life and Genius.* The common assertion which has been in every half critic's mouth, namely, that Mr. Pope had little invention, and therefore has but a bad claim to the name of a Poet, seems to be unguardedly adopted in the very beginning of that ingenious and entertaining Work; and from that principle, the conclusion will probably decide against our English Homer. From the elegant, and, in general, true spirit of criticism, which the Essayist on Mr. Pope's Life

* Most of this digression might have been spared, if the author had waited for Dr. Wharton's second volume, which, to say the truth, was most unaccountably delayed. C.

and Writings is acknowledged to possess, it was reasonably to be expected, that he would have taken a comprehensive view of what INVENTION is, and then examined how far the want of it can be charged upon his Author. But, in that point, does he not seem to think him defenceless, when he asserts that it is upon the merit of the Rape of the Lock, that he will rank as a poet with posterity? The introduction of machinery into this beautiful poem, Mr. Wharton seems to think, shews more invention than any other composition of the Twickenham Bard; though even in this point, he deals out to him the reputation of a MAKER with a sparing and thrifty hand. As the book is near me, I will transcribe the words. 'It 'is in this composition Pope principally appears a poet, in 'which he has displayed more imagination, than in all his 'other works taken together; it should, however, be 'remembered, that he was not the FIRST former and 'creator of those beautiful machines, the Sylphs, on 'which his claim to imagination is chiefly founded. 'He found them existing ready to his hand; but has 'indeed employed them with singular judgment and 'artifice.' But surely, in the use made of the *Sylphs* and *Gnomes*, and the various employments assigned to those imaginary beings, the British Author is as much a POET, as manifestly a MAKER, as the great Father of the epic fable. Homer invented not the gods and goddesses which he has interwoven in his immortal Rhapsody. He took up the system of theology which he found received in Greece. 'He rose,' says Mr. Pope, 'with the 'finest turn imaginable for poetry; and, designing to 'instruct mankind in the manner for which he was most 'adapted, made use of the ministry of the gods to give 'the highest air of veneration to his writings. Nor was 'it his business, when he undertook the province of a poet '(not of a mere philosopher), to be the first who should

'discard that which furnishes poetry with its most beauti-
'ful appearance. Whatever, therefore, he might think
'of his gods he took them as he found them, he brought
'them into action according to the notions which were
'then entertained, and in such stories as were then
'believed.' In the same manner, the author of the Rape of the Lock availed himself of the Rosicrusian system, as he found it set forth in a French book, called 'LE COMTE 'DE GABALIS,' and to those ideal beings he has given such a ministry, such interests, affections, and employments, as carried with them sufficient poetical probability, and made a very beautiful machinery in his poem, enlarging the main action, and ennobling the trifles which it celebrates: not to mention that the superintendency of those imaginary agents was as new in poetry as the *Ministeria Deorum* in the Iliad or Odyssey. Perhaps, if the matter could be traced with accuracy, and a full knowledge of the state of learning, the various systems of theology, and all the doctrines, opinions, and fables, which existed in Homer's days, could be attained, we should find that the invention of the Father of epic poetry, did not so much consist in creating new existences, and striking out new ideas, as in making a poetic use of the fabulous deities, which previously existed in the imaginations of mankind, and in forming new combinations of those ideas, which had been conceived before, but had never been arranged in those complexities, into which his fancy was able to dispose them. Thus we find that Homer's celebrated description of the state of the dead is an absolute copy of the rites, customs, and ceremonies observed by the Egyptians at their funerals. The distribution of rewards and punishments, the residence of the blessed in the Elysian fields, and the shadows of the deceased correspond exactly, says Diodorus Siculus, with the funerals of the Egyptians. The Grecian Mercury

was founded upon the custom of a man's delivering a dead body to be conveyed or carried by another, who wore a mask with three heads, resembling the fiction of *Cerberus*. The Ocean was no other than the Nile, and was even so called by the Egyptians; the gates of the sun meant the town of Heliopolis; and the mansions of the happy, the delightful country about the lake Acherusia, near Memphis, where the dead were deposited in subterraneous vaults. Many other circumstances also agree with the solemnities of Egypt, as they were practised in the time of Diodorus; as the boat in which the deceased were carried; the ferryman, who was called Charon in the language of the country; the temple of Hecate, placed by the poets at the entrance of the infernal regions; the gates of Cocytus and Lethe, shut with bars of brass; and the gates of Truth, where there was an image of Justice. Minos and Rhadamanthus were indeed names taken from Crete; but the ideas were derived from the Egyptian custom of sitting in judgment upon the life, manners, and conduct of the dead, before they were allowed the rites of sepulture. And even strong traces of the punishment of *Tityos*, *Tantalus*, and *Sisyphus*, appear in the antiquities of Egypt; not to mention that the allotment of the daughters of *Danaus*, is a manifest allusion to the ceremony of three hundred and twenty priests pouring water from the Nile into a vessel with holes in the bottom, at a city not far from Memphis. The Greek traveller and Historian enumerates many other mystic traditions, fables, and religious ceremonies, from which the Poet made palpable insertions into his work. Sir John Marsham also, elaborate in his researches into antiquity, has pointed out in the *Canon Ægyptiacus*, a considerable number of those transfusions from the customs and *theology* of Egypt. But it would lead too far from the scope of this Essay, should we enter into a de-

tail of these matters; the curious reader may, if he pleases, see this inquiry pursued with great taste and accuracy by the ingenious Author of the Inquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer; who makes it sufficiently evident, that Egypt, like its own Nile upon the adjacent country, overflowed with all the fertility of science, fable, and mythology, to enrich the vast and capacious imagination of the Grecian Bard. It will be proper, however, to add one observation more in this place, namely, that Homer was not the first, who saw that the Asiatic customs, manners, and learning were capable of being perpetuated with that venerable air, with which they have come down to posterity; a very illustrious ornament both of the republic of letters and the church,* in a most admirable dissertation on the sixth book of the Æneid, has observed, that '*in the* MYSTERIES, *the description of the passage into the* '*other world was borrowed*,' by the Egyptians themselves, '*as was natural, from the circumstances of their funeral* '*rites: and it might easily be proved, if there were occa-* '*sion, that they themselves transferred these realities into* '*the* MYΘOΣ, *and not the Greeks, as other writers gen-* '*erally imagine.*' The same learned inquirer into antiquity has remarked, in another part of the same tract, 'that if '*an old poem, under the name of Orpheus, intitled* '*A Descent into Hell, had been now extant, it would,* '*perhaps, have shewn us, that no more was meant* '*than Orpheus's initiation.*' Now, as it is a settled point, that Orpheus preceded Homer, what shall we say of that invention, which all succeeding ages have agreed to call the very origin and fountain of poetry? Shall we, in the style of the *ancient* or the modern *Zoilus*, illiberally call his immortal Rhapsodies *mere patch-work plundered from the fopperies of Egypt?* Shall we not rather

* The Author of the Divine Legation of Moses.

admire and venerate the vigour of that mind, which, in an age of general darkness and ignorance, could, by unabating industry, by indefatigable travels, and a constant pursuit of knowledge, so replenish itself with the stores of morality, history, politics, geography, fable, and theology, as to import them all into Greece from the various Asiatic climes which he had visited, and interweave them into the texture of two poems, adorned and dignified with all the graces of the most fruitful imagination? If Homer did not originally form and create those prodigious images which abound in his work; if he was not the MAKER of many of those fables, particularly the Descent into Hell, which mankind have so much admired, he at least found out the use and application of them; the combination of those ideas was his own: the scheme was his, which assembled them all into that wonderful union: that is, the general fable was Homer's; and it required no less a genius to give uniformity amidst such an exuberance of variety, intricacy, and complication, with such a noble perspicuity, such a consent of parts so uniting, as the painters express it, into harmony, and rising gradually into such a wonderful whole, that, as Mr. Pope expresses it, *it shall always stand at the top of the sublime character, to be gazed at by readers with an admiration of its perfection, and by writers, with a despair that it should ever be emulated with success.* There can be no manner of doubt, but Homer, from the fecundity of his own fancy, enriched his poetry with many noble descriptions and beautiful episodes, which had never presented themselves to any of his predecessors, but as the models of many passages are still extant in the records of antiquity, it must be allowed that he possessed two sorts of invention; one, primary and original, which could associate images never before combined; the other, secondary and subordinate, which could find out for those ideas, which had been assembled before,

a new place, a new order and arrangement, with new embellishments of the most harmonious and exalted language. From this observation arises the true idea of INVENTION; and whether a poet is hurried away into the description of a fictitious battle, or a grand council of gods or men, or employs himself in giving poetic colourings to a real system of *Mysteries* (as Virgil has done in the sixth Æneid), there is invention in both cases; and though the former may astonish more, the latter will always have its rational admirers; and from such a commentary as the Bishop of Gloucester's, instead of losing from its influence, will appear with a truer and more venerable sublime, than when it was considered as the mere visionary scheme of a poetic imagination. Thus, then, we see the two provinces of INVENTION; at one time it is employed in opening a new vein of thought; at another, in placing ideas, that have been pre-occupied, in a new light, and lending them the advantages of novelty, by the force of a sublimer diction, or the turn of delicate composition. There is a poetic touch, that changes whatever it lights upon to gold; and surely he who calls forth from any object in Nature, or any image of the mind, appearances that have not been observed before, is the INVENTOR, the MAKER of those additional beauties. There is reason to believe, that, of what we have called PRIMARY, or ORIGINAL INVENTION, there has not been so much in any one poet (not even excepting Homer), as has been generally imagined; and indeed, from the many fine descriptions in the Iliad and the Odyssey, which can fairly be proved to be copies, but the copies of a master-poet, there seems room to think, that of the second sort he held a very considerable portion. Nor should this remark be thought derogatory from the high character of the bard, because it only tends to show that he availed himself of all the knowledge, religion, and mythology,

that in his time were scattered over the different regions of Asia and Greece. What is here asserted concerning Homer, may also with truth be asserted of Mr. Pope. Determining to acquire the exalted character of a poet, he enriched his mind with all the knowledge that subsisted in his time; all that could be furnished by the valuable remains of antiquity; all the improvements in science which modern application has brought to light; the pure morality and sublime theology, which Revelation has handed down to us; together with the various systems of philosophy, which speculative men have formed: and of all these he has made as noble a use, as a fine imagination could suggest.* The scheme of thought, which introduces his acquired ideas into any of his poems, was surely his own; the VIRTUE and VENUS of ORDER, which he has given to them, was his own; the apt allusion which illustrates, the metaphor which raises his language into dignity, the general splendour of his diction, the harmony of his numbers, and, in short, the poetic turn of his pieces, were all his own; and all these, surely, were the work of INVENTION, and as this INVENTION glows equally through all his poetry, it is not easy to conceive upon what principle it can be said, that, upon the single strength of the Rape of the Lock, he will rank as a poet with posterity. Can it be said that INVENTION solely consists in describing imaginary beings? or that, where there is not what the critics call a fable, that is to say, an unity of action, with all the various perplexities and incidents

* Pope understood neither the sublime theology of Revelation, nor the various systems of philosophy. His 'Essay on Man' proves this; a work in which he has embellished and exalted by the graces of poetry, certain religious and philosophical opinions which he did not understand, and which he was glad to find vindicated by the ingenuity of his friends. C.

which retard or accelerate the progress of that action, together with a proper degree of marvellous machinery, INVENTION must be proscribed, and declared to have no hand in the work? Even in this way of reasoning, the DUNCIAD will be an everlasting instance of Mr. Pope's INVENTION, and will, perhaps, constitute him a poet, in a degree superior to the *Rape of the Lock*, however exquisite it be in its kind. But these two pieces (if we except the latter part of the fourth Dunciad, which is in its subject important, and in its execution sublime) seem to be but the sportive exercise of the poet's fancy; or, as he himself, talking of the *Batrachomyomachia*, has expressed it, they are 'a beautiful raillery, in which a 'great writer might delight to unbend himself; an instance 'of that agreeable trifling which generally accompanies 'the character of a rich imagination: like a vein of '*mercury* running mingled with a mine of gold.' The Essay on Man will always stand at the *top of the sublime character:* a noble work, indeed, where we find the thorny reasonings of philosophy blooming and shooting forth into all the flowers of poetry; *ferat et rubus asper amomum!* To give to a subject of this kind such beautiful embellishments required, in Lord Shaftsbury's language, a *Muse-like apprehension;* and I cannot see why the treating of *essential truths* in a poetic manner, should not be allowed as cogent an instance of INVENTION, as the ornamental display of an Egyptian theology. The Georgics would have gained Virgil the name of a Poet though the *Æneid* had never been written; and Mr. Pope must ever be considered by posterity as a CHRISTIAN LUCRETIUS. It was, perhaps, harder to give a poetic air and grace to the following ideas, than to describe the imaginary beings of the *Rosicrusian* philosophy, or the fabulous deities of Greece.

Say what the use, were finer optics given,
T'inspect a mite, not comprehend the heaven?
The touch, if tremblingly alive all o'er,
To smart and agonize at ev'ry pore?
Or, quick effluvia darting thro' the brain,
Die of a rose in aromatic pain?
If nature thunder'd in his op'ning ears,
And stunn'd him with the music of the spheres,
How would he wish that heaven had left him still
The whisp'ring zephyr, and the purling rill!

An entire piece, written in this true vein of poetry, requires as fine an imagination to give grace, elegance, and harmony to the composition, as any other subject whatever; and though fable, including various incidents, passions, and characters, be wanting, yet he, who forms a plan such as the nature of his materials require, and, in a barren field, finds the most beautiful flowers to adorn his design, can never, in reason, be charged with a want of INVENTION. The three great primary branches of composition are finely united in the writings of Pope; the imagination is delighted, the passions are awakened, and reason receives conviction; there is poetry to charm, rhetoric to persuade, and argument to demonstrate: and, perhaps, if *Empedocles*, whom Aristotle pronounces a *physiologist*, rather than a *poet*, had been thus excellent in the graces of style, the great critic would have passed upon him a less severe sentence.

IT may be observed by the reader, that in pursuing the foregoing train of reflections, sight has been lost of HENRY FIELDING: but it never was intended in this little tract to observe the rules of strict biography. Besides, men of genius, like the arts they practise, have a connection with each other, and are in a manner linked together by certain ties of affinity: *habent quoddam commune vinculum*,

et quasi cognatione quadam inter se continentur. Moreover, it was expedient, for the true delineation of an eminent writer's character, to remove difficulties out of the way, and to explain the terms of art which critics make use of. And thus having shewn the different provinces of INVENTION, we may now arrive at a juster idea of what is meant, when we talk of an author's GENIUS.

HE may be truly said to be a GENIUS, who possesses the leading faculties of the mind in their vigour, and can exercise them with warmth and spirit upon whatever subject he chuses. The imagination (in order to form a writer of eminence) must, in particular, be very quick and susceptible, or, as a fine poet has expressed it, it must be *feelingly alive all o'er*, that it may receive the strongest impressions either from the objects of Nature, the works of art, or the actions and manners of men; for it is in proportion as this power of the mind is wrought upon, that the author feels in his own breast those fine sensations, which it is his business to impart to others, and that he is able to describe things in so lively a manner, as to make them, as it were, present to us, and of consequence to give what turn he pleases to our affections. The JUDGMENT also must be clear and strong, that the proper parts of a story or description may be selected, that the disposition of the various members of a work may be such, as to give a lucid order to the whole, and that such expression may be made use of, as shall not only serve to convey the intended ideas, but shall convey them forcibly, and with that decorum of style, which the art of composition requires; so that simplicity shall not be impoverished into meanness, nor dignity be encumbered with a load of finery, and affected ornament. Invention must also concur, that new scenery may be opened to the fancy, or, at least, that new lights may be thrown upon the prospects of Nature; that the

sphere of our ideas may be enlarged, or a new assemblage may be formed of them, either in the way of fable or illustration; so that, if the author does not disclose original traces of thinking, by presenting to us objects unseen before, he may at least delight by the novelty of their combination, and the points of view in which he offers them. The power of the mind, moreover, which exerts itself in what Mr. Locke calls the association of ideas, must be quick, vigorous, and warm, because it is from thence that language receives its animated figures, its bold translation of phrases from one idea to another, the *Verbum ardens*, the glowing metaphorical expression, which constitutes the richness and boldness of his imagery; and from thence likewise springs the readiness of ennobling a sentiment or description with the pomp of sublime comparison, or striking it deeper on the mind by the aptness of witty allusion. Perhaps, what we call genius, might be still more minutely analysed; but these are its principal efficient qualities; and in proportion as these, or any of these, shall be found deficient in an author, so many degrees shall he be removed from the first rank and character of a writer. To bring these remarks home to the late Mr. Fielding, an estimate of him may be justly formed, by enquiring how far these various talents may be attributed to him; or, if he failed in any, what that faculty was, and what discount he must suffer for it. But though it would appear, perhaps, that, when he attained that period of life, in which his mind was come to its full growth, he enjoyed every one of these qualifications, in great strength and vigour; yet, in order to give the true character of his talents, to mark the distinguishing specific qualities of his genius, we must look into the temper of the man, and see what bias it gave to his understanding; for when abilities are possessed in an eminent degree by several men, it is the peculiarity of habit that must discriminate them from each other.

A LOVE of imitation very soon prevailed in Mr. Fielding's mind. By Imitation, the reader will not understand that illegitimate kind, which consists in mimicking singularities of person, feature, voice, or manner; but that higher species of representation, which delights in just and faithful copies of human life. So early as when he was at Leyden, a propensity this way began to exert its emotions, and even made some efforts towards a comedy, in the sketch of Don Quixotte in England. When he left that place, and settled in London, a variety of characters could not fail to attract his notice, and of course to strengthen his favourite inclination. It has been already observed in this Essay that distress and disappointments betrayed him into occasional fits of peevishness and satiric humour. The eagerness of creditors, and the fallacy of dissembling friends, would for a while sour his temper; his feelings were acute, and naturally fixed his attention to those objects from whence his uneasiness sprung; of course he became, very early in life, an observer of men and manners. Shrewd and piercing in his discernment, he saw the latent sources of human actions, and he could trace the various incongruities of conduct arising from them.

As the study of Man is delightful in itself, affording a variety of discoveries, and particularly interesting to the heart, it is no wonder that he should feel delight from it; and what we delight in soon grows into an habit. The various ruling passions of men, their foibles, their oddities, and their humours, engaged his attention; and, from these principles, he loved to account for the consequences which appeared in their behaviour. The inconsistencies that flow from vanity, from affectation, from hypocrisy, from pretended friendship, and, in short, all the dissonant qualities which are often blended together by the follies

of men, could not fail to strike a person who had so fine a sense of ridicule. A quick perception in this way, perhaps, affords as much real pleasure as the exercise of any other faculty of the mind, and accordingly we find that the Ridiculous is predominant through all our Author's writings, and he never seems so happy as when he is developing a character made up of motley and repugnant properties, and shews you a man of specious pretences, turning out, in the end, the very reverse of what he would appear. To search out and to describe objects of this kind, seems to have been the favourite bent of Mr. Fielding's mind, as indeed it was of Theophrastus, Molière, and others; like a vortex it drew in all his faculties, which were so happily employed in descriptions of the manners that, upon the whole, he must be pronounced an admirable COMIC GENIUS.

WHEN I call our Author a COMIC GENIUS, I would be understood in the largest acceptation of the phrase; implying humorous and pleasant imitation of men and manners, whether it be in the way of fabulous narration or dramatic composition. In the former species of writing lay the excellence of Mr. Fielding, but in dramatic imitation he must be allowed to fall short of the great masters in that art; and how this hath happened to a COMIC GENIUS, to one eminently possessed of the talents requisite in the humorous provinces of the drama, will appear, at the first blush of the question, something unaccountable. But several causes concurred to produce this effect. In the first place, without a tincture of delicacy running through an entire piece, and giving to good sense an air of urbanity and politeness, it appears to me that no comedy will ever be of that kind which, Horace says, will be particularly desired, and seen, will be advertised again. I know that the influence of a favourite performer may, for a time, uphold a middling production, but when

a *Wilks* leaves the stage even a *Sir Harry Wildair* will be thrown by neglected. The idea of delicacy in writing I find so well explained in an ingenious essay on that subject, now on the table before me, that I shall transcribe the passage. '*Delicacy*,' says this polite Author, '*is* '*good sense, but good sense refined, which produces an* '*inviolable attachment to decorum and sanctity, as well as* '*elegance of manners, with a clear discernment and warm* '*sensibility of whatever is pure, regular, and polite; and,* '*at the same time, an abhorrence of whatever is gross,* '*rustic, or impure; of unnatural, effeminate, and over-* '*wrought ornaments of every kind. It is, in short, the* '*Graceful and the Beautiful, added to the Just and the* '*Good.*' By snatching the grace here defined and described, the late Colley Cibber has been able, in a few of his plays, to vie with, and almost outstrip, the greatest wits of this country; and by not adverting to this embellishment, this liberal air of expression, if I may so call it, Mr. Fielding, with strong observation upon life, and excellent discernment of the Humorous and the Ridiculous, in short, with a great COMIC GENIUS, has been rather unsuccessful in COMEDY. There seems to me little or no room to doubt but that this want of refinement, which we here complain of, was principally owing to the woundings which every fresh disappointment gave him, before he was yet well disciplined in the school of life, and hackneyed in the ways of men; for, in a more advanced period, when he did not write *recentibus odiis*, with his uneasiness just beginning to fester, but with a calmer and more dispassionate temper, we perceive him giving all the graces of description to incidents and passions which, in his youth, he would have dashed out with a rougher hand. An ingenious writer,* to whom we have already referred, has passed a judgment upon *Ben Jonson*, which,

* Mr. Hurd.

though Fielding did not attain the same dramatic eminence, may be justly applied to him. 'His taste for 'ridicule was strong, but indelicate, which made him not 'over-curious in the choice of his topics. And, lastly, 'his *style* in picturing his characters, though masterly, 'was without that elegance of hand which is required 'to correct and allay the force of so bold a colouring. 'Thus, the bias of his nature leading him to Plautus rather 'than Terence for his model, it is not to be wondered that 'his wit is too frequently caustic, his raillery coarse, and 'his humour excessive.' Perhaps the asperity of Fielding's muse was not a little encouraged by the practice of two great wits, who had fallen into the same vein before him, I mean *Wycherley* and *Congreve*, who were, in general, painters of harsh features, attached more to subjects of deformity than grace; whose drawings of women are ever a sort of *Harlot's Progress*, and whose men, for the most part, lay violent hands upon deeds and settlements, and generally deserve informations in the King's Bench. These two celebrated writers were not fond of copying the amiable part of human life; they had not learned the secret of giving the softer graces of composition to their tablature, by contrasting the Fair and Beautiful, in characters and manners, to the Vicious and Irregular, and thereby rendering their pieces more exact imitations of Nature. By making Congreve his model, it is no wonder that our Author contracted this vicious turn, and became faulty in that part of his art, which the painters would call DESIGN. In his style, he derived an error from the same source: he sometimes forgot that humour and ridicule were the two principal ingredients of comedy; and, like his master, he frequently aimed at decorations of wit, which do not appear to make part of the *ground*, but seem rather to be embroidered upon it. It has been observed,* that the

* See the Adventurer.

plays of *Congreve appear not to be legitimate comedies, but strings of repartees and sallies of wit, the most poignant and polite, indeed, but unnatural and ill-placed.* If we except the *Old Batchelor*, *Foresight*, and *Sir Sampson Legend*, there will hardly, perhaps, be found a character in this lively writer exempt from this general censure. The frequent surprises of allusion, and the quickness and vivacity of those sudden turns, which abound in Mr. Congreve, breaking out where you least expected them, as if a train of wit had been laid all around, put one in mind of those fire-works in a water-piece, which used formerly to be played off at *Cuper's Gardens;* no sooner one tube, charged with powder, raised itself above the surface, and vented itself in various forms and evolutions of fire, but instantly another and another was lighted up; and the pleasure of the spectators arose from seeing secret artificial mines blazing out of an element, in which such a machinery could not be expected. The same kind of entertainment our Author aimed at too frequently in his comedies; and as in this he bore a similitude to *Wycherley* and *Congreve*, so he also frequently resembled them in the indelicacy, and sometimes the downright obscenity, of his raillery; a vice introduced, or at least pampered, by the wits of Charles II.; the dregs of it, till very lately, not being quite purged away. There is another circumstance respecting the drama, in which *Fielding's* judgment seems to have failed him: the strength of his genius certainly lay in fabulous narration, and he did not sufficiently consider that some incidents of a story, which when related, may be worked up into a deal of pleasantry and humour, are apt when thrown into action, to excite sensations incompatible with humour and ridicule. I will venture to say, that, if he had resolved to shape the business and characters of his last comedy (*The Wedding Day*) into

the form of a novel, there is not one scene in the piece, which, in his hands, would not have been very susceptible of ornament: but, as they are arranged at present in dramatic order, there are few of them from which the taste and good sense of an audience ought not, with propriety, to revolt. When *Virgil* is preparing the catastrophe of his *Dido*, the critics have never objected to him, that he describes the nurse, with a motherly and officious care, tottering along the apartments:

——Illa gradum studio celerabat anili.

But woe to the tragic poet, that should offer to present the same circumstance to the eye of an audience! The *Tom Jones* of our Author, and the *Gil Blas* of *Le Sage*, still continue to yield universal delight to their respective readers; but two late attempts to dramatize them, if I may so call it, have demonstrated that the characters and incidents of those applauded performances, which, when figured to us by the imagination only, are found so agreeable and interesting, lose much of their comic force and beauty, when they are attemped to be realised to us on the stage. There are objects and parts of Nature, which the rules of composition will allow to be described, but not actually to be produced on the scene; because they are attended with some concomitant circumstances, which, in the narrative, are overlooked, but when shewn to view press too hardly on the mind, and become indelicate.

Segnius irritant animos demissa per aurem
Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus, & quæ
Ipse sibi tradit spectator.—

To these causes of our Author's failure in the province of the drama, may be added that sovereign contempt he

always entertained for the understandings of the generality of mankind. It was in vain to tell him, that a particular scene was dangerous, on account of its coarseness, or because it retarded the general business with feeble efforts of wit; he doubted the discernment of his auditors, and so thought himself secured by their stupidity, if not by his own humour and vivacity. A very remarkable instance of this disposition appeared, when the comedy of the Wedding Day was put into rehearsal. An actor who was principally concerned in the piece, and, though young, was then, by the advantage of happy requisites, an early favourite of the Public, told Mr. Fielding he was apprehensive that the audience would make free with him in a particular passage; adding, that a repulse might so flurry his spirits as to disconcert him for the rest of the night, and therefore begged that it might be omitted. 'No, 'd—mn 'em,' replied the bard, 'if the scene is not a good 'one, let them find *that* out.' Accordingly the play was brought on without alteration, and, just as had been foreseen, the disapprobation of the house was provoked at the passage before objected to; and the performer, alarmed and uneasy at the hisses he had met with, retired into the green-room, where the Author was indulging his genius, and solacing himself with a bottle of champaigne. He had by this time drank pretty plentifully; and cocking his eye at the actor, with streams of tobacco trickling down from the corner of his mouth, '*What's the matter*, '*Garrick?*' says he, '*what are they hissing now?*' 'Why 'the scene that I begged you to retrench; I knew it would 'not do; and they have so frightened me, that I shall not 'be able to collect myself again the whole night.' '*Oh!* '*damn 'em*,' replies the Author, '*they* HAVE *found it out*, '*have they?*'

If we add to the foregoing remarks an observation of

his own, namely, that he left off writing for the stage, when he ought to have begun; and together with this, consider his extreme hurry and dispatch, we shall be able fully to account for his not bearing a more distinguished place in the rank of dramatic writers. It is apparent that, in the frame and constitution of his genius, there was no defect, but some faculty or other was suffered to lie dormant, and the rest of course were exerted with less efficacy: at one time we see his wit superseding all his other talents; at another, his invention runs riot, and multiplies incidents and characters in a manner repugnant to all the received laws of the drama. Generally his judgment was very little consulted. And, indeed, how could it be otherwise? When he had contracted to bring on a play, or a farce, it is well known, by many of his friends now living, that he would go home rather late from a tavern, and would, the next morning, deliver a scene to the players, written upon the papers which had wrapped the tobacco, in which he so much delighted.

NOTWITHSTANDING the inaccuracies, which have arisen from this method of proceeding, there is not a play, in the whole collection, which is not remarkable for some degree of merit, very striking in its kind; in general, there prevails a fine idea of character; occasionally, we see the true Comic, both of situation and sentiment; and always we find a strong knowledge of life, delivered indeed with a caustic wit, but often zested with fine infusions of the Ridiculous: so that, upon the whole, the plays and farces of our Author are well worthy of a place in this general edition of his works; and the reader, who peruses them attentively, will not only carry away with him many useful discoveries of the foibles, affectations, and humours of mankind, but will also agree with me, that inferior productions are now successful upon the stage.

As it was the lot of Henry Fielding to write always with a view to profit, it cannot but mortify a benevolent mind to perceive, from our Author's own account (for he is generally honest enough to tell the reception his pieces met with), that he derived but small aids towards his subsistence from the treasurer of the playhouse. One of his farces he has printed, as it was *damned* at the Theatre Royal in Drury-Lane; and that he might be *more generous to his enemies than they were willing to be to him*, he informs them, in the general preface to his Miscellanies, that for the *Wedding Day*, though acted six nights, his profits from the house did not exceed fifty pounds. A fate not much better attended him in his earlier productions; but the severity of the Public, and the malice of his enemies, met with a noble alleviation from the patronage of the late Duke of Richmond, John Duke of Argyle, the late Duke of Roxborough, and many persons of distinguished rank and character; among whom may be numbered the present Lord Lyttleton, whose friendship to our Author softened the rigour of his misfortunes, while he lived, and exerted itself towards his memory, when he was no more, by taking pains to clear up imputations of a particular kind, which had been thrown out against his character.*

Mr. Fielding had not been long a writer for the stage, when he married Miss Craddock, a beauty from Salisbury. About that time, his mother dying, a moderate estate, at Stower, in Dorsetshire, devolved to him. To that place he retired with his wife, on whom he doated, with a resolution to bid adieu to all the follies and intemperances to which he had addicted himself in the career of a town-life. But unfortunately a kind of family-pride here

* Lord Lyttleton died in 1773. C.

gained an ascendant over him; and he began immediately to vie in splendour with the neighbouring country 'squires. With an estate not much above two hundred pounds a year, and his wife's fortune, which did not exceed fifteen hundred pounds, he encumbered himself with a large retinue of servants, all clad in costly yellow liveries.* For their master's honour, these people could not descend so low as to be careful in their apparel, but in a month or two, were unfit to be seen; the 'squire's dignity required that they should be new-equipped; and his chief pleasure consisting in society and convivial mirth, hospitality threw open his doors, and in less than three years, entertainments, hounds and horses entirely devoured a little patrimony, which, had it been managed with economy, might have secured to him a state of independence for the rest of his life; and, with independence, a thing still more valuable, a character free from those interpretations, which the severity of mankind generally puts upon the actions of a man, whose imprudences have led him into difficulties: for, when once it is the fashion to condemn a character in the gross, few are willing to distinguish between the impulses of necessity, and the inclinations of the heart. Sensible of the disagreeable situation he had now reduced himself to, our Author immediately determined to exert his best endeavours to recover, what he had wantonly thrown away, a decent competence; and, being then about thirty years of age, he betook himself to the study of the law. The friendships he met with in the course of his studies, and, indeed, through the remainder of his life, from the gentlemen of that profession in general, and particularly from some,

* Fielding has ingeniously incorporated this piece of folly in his *Amelia*, Book III. Chap. 12. *Booth*, with respect to imprudence and conjugal affection, was Henry Fielding, and Richardson asserts that *Amelia* was the first Mrs. Fielding. C.

who have since risen to be the first ornaments of the law, will for ever do honour to his memory. His application, while he was a student in the Temple, was remarkably intense; and though it happened that the early taste he had taken of pleasure would occasionally return upon him, and conspire with his spirit and vivacity to carry him into the wild enjoyments of the town, yet it was particular in him, that, amidst all his dissipations, nothing could suppress the thirst he had for knowledge, and the delight he felt in reading; and this prevailed in him to such a degree, that he has been frequently known, by his intimates, to retire late at night from a tavern to his chambers, and there read, and make extracts from, the most abstruse authors, for several hours before he went to bed; so powerful were the vigour of his constitution and the activity of his mind. A parody on what *Paterculus* says of *Scipio* might justly be applied to Henry Fielding: always over a social bottle or a book, he enured his body to the dangers of intemperance, and exercised his mind with studies: *semperque inter arma ac studia versatus, aut corpus periculis, aut animum disciplinis exercuit.* After the customary time of probation at the Temple, he was called to the Bar, and was allowed to have carried with him to Westminster Hall no incompetent share of learning. He attended with punctual assiduity, both in term-time and on the Western circuit, as long as his health permitted him; but the gout soon began to make such assaults upon him, as rendered it impossible for him to be as constant at the bar as the laboriousness of his profession required: he could only now follow the law by snatches, at such intervals as were free from indisposition; which could not but be a dispiriting circumstance, as he saw himself at once disabled from ever rising to the eminence he aspired to.* However, under

* The gentlemen of the Western circuit have a tradition concerning

the severities of pain and want, he still pursued his researches with an eagerness of curiosity peculiar to him; and though it is wittily remarked by Wycherley, that *Apollo* and *Littleton* seldom meet in the same brain, yet Mr. Fielding is allowed to have acquired a respectable share of jurisprudence, and, in some particular branches, he is said to have arisen to a great degree of eminence; more especially in crown law, as may be judged by his leaving two volumes in folio upon that subject. This work remains still unpublished in the hands of his brother, Sir John Fielding; and by him I am informed, that it is deemed perfect in some parts. It will serve to give us an idea of the great force and vigour of his mind, if we consider him pursuing so arduous a study under the exigences of family distress; with a wife and children whom he tenderly loved, looking up to him for subsistence; with a body lacerated with the acutest pains; and with a mind distracted by a thousand avocations; and obliged, for immediate supply, to produce, almost extempore, a play, a farce, a pamphlet, or a newspaper. A large number of fugitive political tracts, which had their value when the incidents were actually passing on the great scene of business, came from his pen: the periodical paper, called the Champion, owing its chief support to his abilities; and though his essays, in that collection, cannot now be so ascertained, as to perpetuate them in this edition of his works, yet the reputation

FIELDING, which, though somewhat inconsistent with the account that Mr. Murphy has given of him, yet is perfectly agreeable to the idea generally entertained of his humour and character. Having attended the judges two or three years without the least prospect of success, he published proposals for a new law-book: which being circulated round the country, the young barrister was, at the ensuing assizes, loaded with briefs at every town on the circuit.—But his practice thus suddenly increased, almost as suddenly declined. Ann. Regis. 1762. C.

arising to him at the time of publication, was not inconsiderable.* It does not appear that he ever wrote much poetry: with such talents as he possessed, it cannot be supposed he was unqualified to acquit himself handsomely in that art; but correct versification probably required more pains and time than his exigences would allow. In the preface to his Miscellanies, he tells us, that his poetical pieces were mostly written when he was very young, and were the productions of the heart rather than of the head. He adds, that this branch of writing is what he very little pretended to, and was very little his pursuit. Accordingly, out of this edition, which is intended to consist entirely of pieces more highly finished than works of mere amusement generally are, his verses are all discarded: but as a specimen of his ability in this way, it is judged proper to preserve, in this Essay on his Life and Genius, one short piece, which the reader will not find unentertaining.

* Ralph succeeded Fielding in carrying on this paper, but none of the Essays were republished except two volumes, including the period when Fielding was the principal author. Some of them might, I think, be attributed to Fielding, from internal evidence, but they would add little to his fame. C.

AN EPISTLE

TO THE RIGHT HON. SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.

WHILE at the helm of state you ride,
Our nation's envy and its pride;
While foreign courts with wonder gaze,
And curse those councils which they praise;
Would you not wonder, Sir, to view
Your bard a greater man than you?
Which that he is, you cannot doubt,
When you have read the sequel out.

You know, great Sir, that ancient fellows,
Philosophers, and such folks, tell us
No great analogy between
Greatness and happiness is seen.
If then, as it might follow straight,
Wretched to be, is to be *great;*
Forbid it, Gods, that you should try
What 'tis to be so great as I!

The family that dines the latest,
Is in our street esteem'd the greatest;
But latest hours must surely fall
'Fore him, who never dines at all.

Your taste in architect, you know,
Hath been admir'd by friend and foe;
But can your earthly domes compare
With all my castles—in the air?

We're often taught, it doth behove us
To think those greater, who're above us;

Another instance of my glory,
Who live above you, twice two story;
And from my garret can look down
On the whole street of *Arlington.**

Greatness by poets still is painted
With many followers acquainted:
This too doth in my favour speak:
Your levee is but twice a week:
From mine I can exclude but one day,
My door is quiet on a Sunday.

Nor, in the manner of attendance,
Doth your great bard claim less ascendance.
Familiar you to admiration
May be approach'd by all the nation;
While I, like the Mogul in *Indo*,
Am never seen but at my window.
If with my greatness you're offended,
The fault is easily amended;
For I'll come down, with wond'rous ease,
Into whatever *place* you please.

I'm not ambitious; little matters
Will serve us great, but humble creatures.
Suppose a secretary o' this isle,
Just to be doing with a while;
Admiral, gen'ral, judge, or bishop:
Or I can foreign treaties dish up.
If the good genius of the nation
Should call me to negociation,
Tuscan and *French* are in my head,
Latin I write, and *Greek*—I read.

* Where Sir Robert Walpole lived.

If you should ask, what pleases best
To get the most, and do the least.
What fittest for?—You know, I'm sure;
I'm fittest for——a *sine-cure.**

THIS piece, it appears, was written in the year 1730 and it shews at once our Author's early acquaintance with distress, and the firmness of mind which he supported under it. Of his other works (I mean such as were written before his genius was come to its full growth) an account will naturally be expected in this place; and fortunately he has spoken of them himself, in the discourse prefixed to his Miscellanies (which is not reprinted in the body of this edition), in terms so modest and sensible, that I am sure the reader will dispense with any other criticism or analysis of them.

'THE Essay on Conversation,' says Mr. Fielding, 'was designed to ridicule out of society one of the most pernicious evils which attends it, *viz.* pampering the gross appetites of selfishness and ill-nature, with the shame and disquietude of others; whereas true good-breeding consists in contributing to the satisfaction and happiness of all about us.

'THE Essay on the *Knowledge of the Characters of Men* exposes a second great evil, namely, hypocrisy; the bane of all virtue, morality, and goodness; and may serve to arm the honest, undesigning, open-hearted man, who is generally the prey of this monster, against it.'

'For instance: when you rashly think
No Rhymer can like Welsted sink,

* Swift's notice of Fielding as a poet, is introduced here for the sake of Dr. Wharton's reflection, which may be extended to all who form hasty opinions.

His merits balanc'd you shall find,
That Fielding leaves him far behind.' *

THE *Journey from this World to the Next*, it should seem, provoked the dull, short-sighted, and malignant enemies of our Author to charge him with an intention to subvert the settled notions of mankind in philosophy and religion, for he assures us, in form, that he did not intend, in this allegorical piece, 'to oppose any prevailing 'system, or to erect a new one of his own. With greater 'justice,' he adds, 'that he might be arraigned of igno-'rance for having, in the relation which he has put into 'the mouth of *Julian*, whom they call the Apostate, done 'many violences to history, and mixed truth and false-'hood with much freedom. But he professed fiction, and 'though he chose some facts out of history to embellish 'his work, and fix a chronology to it, he has not, how-'ever, confined himself to nice exactness, having often 'ante-dated, and sometimes post-dated, the matter which 'he found in the Spanish history, and transplanted into 'his work.' The reader will find a great deal of true humour in many passages of this production; and the surprise with which he has made Mr. Addison hear of the *Eleusinian Mysteries*, in the sixth Æneid, is a well-turned compliment to the learned author, who has, with so much elegance and ability, traced out the analogy between Virgil's system and those memorable rites.†

* 'Little did Swift imagine,' says Dr. Wharton, 'that this very 'Fielding would hereafter equal him in works of humour, and excel 'him in drawing and supporting characters, and in the artful conduct 'and plan of a Comic Epopée.' It appears by Richardson's Correspondence, that he and Aaron Hill cajoled each other into an opinion that Pope and Fielding would soon be known no more! C.

† After all, it does not very clearly appear what Mr. Fielding's real design was in this work, which breaks off abruptly, either from want

WITH regard to the History of *Jonathan Wild*, his design, he tells us, was not 'to enter the lists with that 'excellent historian, who, from authentic papers and 'records, &c., hath given so satisfactory an account of 'this great man, nor yet to contend with the memoirs of 'the Ordinary of Newgate, which generally contain a 'more particular relation of what the heroes are to suffer 'in the next world, than of what they did in this. The 'History of Jonathan Wild is rather a narrative of such 'actions as he might have performed, or would, or should 'have performed, than what he really did, and may in 'reality as well suit any other such great man as the 'person himself whose name it bears. As it is not a 'very faithful portrait of *Jonathan Wild*, so neither is it 'intended to represent the features of any other person; 'roguery, and not a rogue, is the subject; so that any 'particular application will be unfair in the reader, 'especially if he knows much of the great world, since he 'must then be acquainted with more than one on whom 'he can fix the resemblance.'

OUR Author proceeds to give a further account of this work in a strain which shews, however conversant he might be in the characters of men, that he did not suffer a gloomy misanthropy to take possession of him, as to make him entertain depreciating ideas of mankind in general, without exceptions in favour of a great part of the species. Though the passage be long I shall here transcribe it, as it will prove subservient to two purposes; it will throw a proper light upon the History of *Jonathan Wild*, and it will do honour to Mr. Fielding's sentiments. 'I solemnly protest,' says he, 'that I do by no means 'intend, in the character of my hero, to represent human

of materials, or a wish to convey his satire in some more regular form. C.

'nature in general, such insinuations must be attended 'with very dreadful conclusions: nor do I see any other 'tendency they can naturally have but to encourage and 'sooth men in their villanies, and to make every well-'disposed man disclaim his own species, and curse the 'hour of his birth into such a society. For my part, I 'understand those writers who describe human nature in 'this depraved character, as speaking only of such persons 'as *Wild* and his *gang;* and I think it may be justly 'inferred that they do not find in their own bosoms any 'deviation from the general rule. Indeed it would be an 'insufferable vanity in them to conceive themselves as 'the only exception to it. But without considering New-'gate as no other than human nature with its mask off, 'which some very shameless writers have done, I think 'we may be excused for suspecting that the splendid 'palaces of the great are often no other than Newgate 'with the mask on; nor do I know any thing which can 'raise an honest man's indignation higher than that the 'same morals should be in one place attended with all 'imaginable misery and infamy, and in the other with 'the highest luxury and honour. Let any impartial man 'in his senses be asked for which of these two places a 'composition of cruelty, lust, avarice, rapine, insolence, 'hypocrisy, fraud, and treachery, is best fitted? Surely 'his answer must be certain and immediate; and yet I 'am afraid all these ingredients, glossed over with wealth 'and a title, have been treated with the highest respect 'and veneration in the one, while one or two of them 'have been condemned to the gallows in the other. If 'there are, then, any men of such morals, who dare call 'themselves great, and are so reputed, or called, at least 'by the deceived multitude, surely a little private censure 'by the few is a very moderate tax for them to pay, pro-'vided no more was to be demanded; but however the

'glare of riches and awe of title may dazzle and terrify 'the vulgar, nay, however hypocrisy may deceive the 'more discerning, there is still a judge in every man's 'breast, which none can cheat or corrupt, though, per-'haps, it is the only uncorrupt thing about him. And 'yet, inflexible and honest as this judge is (however 'polluted the bench be on which he sits), no man can, 'in my opinion, enjoy any applause which is not ad-'judged to be his due. Nothing seems to be more pre-'posterous, than that, while the way to true honour lies 'so open and plain, men should seek faults by such per-'verse and rugged paths; that, while it is so easy, and 'safe, and truly honourable to be good, men should wade 'through difficulty and danger, and real infamy, to be '*great*, or, to use a synonimous word, *villains*. Nor hath 'goodness less advantage, in the article of pleasures, 'than of honour, over this kind of greatness. The same 'righteous judge always annexes a bitter anxiety to the 'purchase of guilt, whilst it adds double sweetness to the 'enjoyments of innocence and virtue; for fear, which, all 'the wise agree, is the most wretched of human evils, is, 'in some degree, always attending the former, and never 'can, in any manner, molest the happiness of the latter. 'This is the doctrine which I have endeavoured to in-'culcate in this history; confining myself, at the same 'time, within the rules of probability: for, except in one 'chapter, which is meant as a burlesque on the extrava-'gant account of travellers, I believe I have not ex-'ceeded it. And though, perhaps, it sometimes happens, 'contrary to the instances I have given, that the villain 'succeeds in his pursuit, and acquires some transitory, 'imperfect honour or pleasure to himself for his iniquity; 'yet, I believe, he oftener shares the fate of *Jonathan* '*Wild*, and suffers the punishment, without obtaining the 'reward. As I believe it is not easy to teach a more

'useful lesson than this, if I have been able to add the 'Pleasant to it, I might flatter myself with having car-'ried every point. But, perhaps some apology may be 'required of me, for having used the word *greatness*, to 'which the world has annexed such honourable ideas, in 'so disgraceful and contemptuous a light. Now if the 'fact be, that the greatness, which is commonly worship-'ped, is really of that kind, which I have here represented, 'the fault seems rather to lie in those, who have ascribed 'to it those honours, to which it hath not, in reality, the 'least claim. The truth, I apprehend, is, we often con-'found the ideas of goodness and greatness together, or 'rather include the former in our idea of the latter. If 'this be so, it is surely a great error, and no less than a 'mistake of the capacity for the will. In reality no 'qualities can be more distinct: for as it cannot be 'doubted, but that benevolence, honour, honesty, and 'charity, make a good man; and that parts and courage 'are the efficient qualities of a great man; so it must be 'confessed, that the ingredients which compose the former 'of these characters, bear no analogy to, nor dependence 'on, those which constitute the latter. A man may 'therefore be great, without being good, or good, without 'being great. However, though the one bear no necessary 'dependence on the other, neither is there any absolute 'repugnancy among them, which may totally prevent 'their union; so that they may, though not of necessity, 'assemble in the same mind, as they actually did, and all 'in the highest degree, in those of *Socrates* and *Brutus;* 'and, perhaps, in some among us. I at least know one, 'to whom Nature could have added no one great or good 'quality, more than she hath bestowed on him. Here 'then appear three distinct characters; the *great*, the '*good*, and the *great and good*. The last of these is the 'true Sublime in human nature; that elevation, by which

'the soul of man, raising and extending itself above the 'order of this creation, and brightened with a certain 'ray of divinity, looks down on the condition of mortals. 'This is indeed a glorious object, on which we can never 'gaze with too much praise and admiration. A perfect 'work! the Iliad of Nature! ravishing and astonishing, 'and which at once fills us with love, with wonder, 'and delight. The second falls greatly short of this per-'fection, and yet hath its merit. Our wonder ceases; 'our delight is lessened; but our love remains: of which 'passion goodness hath always appeared to me the only 'true and proper object. On this head, it may be proper 'to observe, that I do not conceive my good man to be 'absolutely a fool or a coward; but that he often partakes 'too little of parts or courage, to have any pretension to 'greatness. Now as to that greatness, which is totally 'devoid of goodness, it seems to me in nature to resemble 'the *false sublime* in poetry; where *bombast* is, by the 'ignorant and ill-judging vulgar, often mistaken for solid 'wit and eloquence, whilst it is in effect the very reverse. 'Thus pride, ostentation, insolence, cruelty and every kind 'of villany, are often construed into true greatness of 'mind, in which we always include an idea of goodness. 'This *bombast greatness*, then, is the character I intend to 'expose; and the more this prevails in, and deceives the 'world, taking to itself not only riches and power, but 'often honour, or at least the shadow of it, the more 'necessary it is to strip the monster of these false colours, 'and shew it in its native deformity; for, by suffering vice 'to possess the reward of virtue, we do a double injury to 'society, by encouraging the former, and taking away the 'chief incentive to the latter. Nay, though it is, I believe, 'impossible to give vice a true relish of honour and glory, 'or, though we give it riches and power, to give it the 'enjoyment of them; yet it contaminates the food it

'cannot taste; and sullies the robe, which neither fits
'nor becomes it, till virtue disdains them both.'

THUS hath our Author developed the design with which he wrote the history of *Jonathan Wild;* a noble purpose, surely, and of the highest importance to society. A satire like this, which at once strips off the spurious ornaments of hypocrisy, and shews the genuine beauty of the moral character, will be always worthy of the attention of the reader, who desires to rise wise or better from the book he peruses; not to mention that this performance hath, in many places, such seasonings of humour, that it cannot fail to be a very high entertainment to all, who have a taste for exhibitions of the Absurd and Ridiculous in human life. But though the merit of the Life of *Jonathan Wild* be very considerable, yet it must be allowed to be very short of that higher order of composition, which our Author attained in his other pieces of invention. Hitherto he seems but preluding, as it were, to some great work, in which all the component parts of his genius were to be seen in their full and vigorous exertion; in which his *imagination* was to strike us by the most lively and just colouring, his *wit* to enliven by the happiest allusions, his *invention* to enrich with the greatest variety of character and incident, and his *judgment* to charm, not only by the propriety and grace of particular parts, but by the order, harmony, and congruity of the whole: to this high excellence he made strong approaches in the *Joseph Andrews;* and in the *Tom Jones* he has fairly borne away the palm.

IN the progress of Henry Fielding's talents, there seems to have been three remarkable periods; one, when his genius broke forth at once, with an effulgence superior to all the rays of light it had before emitted, like the sun in

his morning glory, without the ardour and the blaze which afterwards attend him; the second, when it was displayed with collected force, and a fulness of perfection, like the sun in meridian majesty, with all his highest warmth and splendour; and the third, when the same genius, grown more cool and temperate, still continued to cheer and enliven, but shewed at the same time, that it was tending to its decline; like the same sun abating from his ardour, but still gilding the western hemisphere.

To these three epochas of our Author's genius, the reader will be beforehand with me in observing that there is an exact correspondency in the *Joseph Andrews*, *Tom Jones*, and *Amelia*. Joseph Andrews, as the preface to the work informs us, was intended for an imitation of the style and manner of *Cervantes;* and how delightfully he has copied the humour, the gravity, and the fine ridicule of his master, they can witness who are acquainted with both writers.* The truth is, Fielding, in this performance, was employed in the very province for which his talents were peculiarly and happily formed, namely, the fabulous narration of some imagined action, which did occur, or might probably have occurred, in human life. Nothing could be more happily conceived than the character of Parson Adams for the principal personage of the work; the humanity and benevolence of affection, the goodness of heart, and the zeal for virtue, which come from him upon all occasions, attach us to Mr. Adams in the most endearing manner; his excellent talents, his erudition, and his real acquirements of knowledge in classical antiquity, and the sacred writings, together with his honesty, command our esteem and respect, while his

* Fielding's ridicule is of a very different species from that of Cervantes. Dr. Wharton thinks it difficult to say why Fielding should call this novel an *imitation* of that truly original author. C.

simplicity and innocence in the ways of men provoke our smiles by the contrast they bear to his real intellectual character, and conduce to make him in the highest manner the object of mirth, without degrading him in our estimation by the many ridiculous embarrassments to which they every now and then make him liable; and, to crown the whole, that habitual absence of mind which is his predominant foible, and which never fails to give a tinge to whatever he is about, makes the honest clergyman almost a rival of the renowned *Don Quixotte;* the adventures he is led into, in consequence of this infirmity, assuming something of the romantic air which accompanies the knight-errant, and the circumstances of his forgetfulness tending as strongly to excite our laughter as the mistakes of the Spanish hero. I will venture to say that, when Don Quixotte mistakes the barber's bason for *Mambrino's* helmet, no reader ever found the situation more ridiculous and truly comic than Parson Adams' travelling to London to sell a set of sermons, and actually *snapping his fingers, and taking two or three turns round the room in extasy*, when introduced to a bookseller in order to make an immediate bargain, and then, immediately after, not being able to find those same sermons, when he exclaims, 'I profess, I believe, I left them behind 'me!' There are many touches in the conduct of this character which occasion the most exquisite merriment; and I believe it will not be found too bold an assertion if we say that the celebrated character of an absent man, by La Bruyère, is extremely short of that true and just resemblance to Nature with which our author has delineated the features of Adams: the former indeed is carried to an agreeable extravagance, but the latter has the fine lights and shades of probability. It will not be improper here to mention that the reverend Mr. Young, a learned and much esteemed friend of Mr. Fielding's, sat for this

picture. Mr. Young was remarkable for his intimate acquaintance with the Greek authors, and had as passionate a veneration for *Æschylus* as Parson Adams; the overflowings of his benevolence were as strong, and his fits of *reverie* were as frequent, and occurred too upon the most interesting occasions. Of this last observation a singular instance is given by a gentleman who served during the last war in Flanders, in the very same regiment to which Mr. Young was chaplain. On a fine summer's evening he thought proper to indulge himself in his love of a solitary walk, and accordingly he sallied forth from his tent. The beauties of the hemisphere, and the landscape round him, pressed warmly on his imagination; his heart overflowed with benevolence to all God's creatures, and gratitude to the Supreme Dispenser of that emanation of glory which covered the face of things. It is very possible that a passage in his dearly beloved *Æschylus* occurred to his memory on this occasion, and seduced his thoughts into a profound meditation. Whatever was the object of his reflections, certain it is that something did powerfully seize his imagination so as to preclude all attention to things that lay immediately before him; and, in that deep fit of absence, Mr. Young proceeded on his journey, till he arrived very quietly and calmly in the enemy's camp, where he was, with difficulty, brought to a recollection of himself by the repetition of *Qui va là?* from the soldiers upon duty. The officer who commanded, finding that he had strayed thither in the undesigning simplicity of his heart, and seeing an innate goodness in his prisoner which commanded his respect, very politely gave him leave to pursue his contemplations home again. Such was the gentleman from whom the idea of Parson Adams was derived; how it is interwoven into the History of Joseph Andrews, and how sustained with unabating pleasantry to the conclusion,

need not be mentioned here, as it is sufficiently felt and acknowledged. The whole work indeed abounds with situations of the truly comic kind; the incidents and characters are unfolded with fine turns of surprise, and it is among the few works of invention, produced by English writers, which will always continue in request. But still it is but the sun-rise of our Author's genius. The hint, it seems, was suggested to him by the success of the late Mr. *Richardson's* history of Pamela Andrews. Joseph is here represented as her brother, and he boasts the same virtue and continency which are the characteristics of his sister.* In the plan of the work Mr. Fielding did not form to himself a circle wide enough for the abundance of his imagination; the main action was too trivial and unimportant to admit of the variety of characters and events which the reader generally looks for in such productions: the attainment of perfection in this kind of writing was in reserve for Mr. Fielding in a future work.

Soon after the publication of Joseph Andrews, the last comedy which came from this writer's pen was exhibited on the stage, intitled *The Wedding Day:* and, as we have already observed, it was attended with an indifferent share of success. The law, from this time, had its hot and cold fits with him; he pursued it by starts, and after frequent intermissions, which are ever fatal in this profession, in which whoever is situated, is, for a long time, in

* This is not all. Borrowing the hint might have been pardonable, and even felt as a compliment by Richardson; but the truth is, Joseph Andrews was written to ridicule Pamela, who, in the latter chapters is made to assume a conduct and language befitting 'the beggar on horseback.' This Richardson never forgave. In his Correspondence, lately published, wherever he has occasion to mention Fielding, it is with rancour or contempt; and his correspondents, who seem to have conspired to flatter him into dotage, repeat his sentiments with profound acquiescence. C.

the condition of the boatman described in the *Georgics*, working his way against the stream; and, if he should by chance remit from his labour, he is rapidly carried back, and loses from the progress he had made:

> ———*si brachia fortè remisit,*
> *Atque illum in præceps prono rapit alveus amni.*

These occasional relaxations of industry Mr. Fielding felt, and he also felt the inconveniences of them; which was the more severe upon him, as voluntary and wilful neglect could not be charged upon him. The repeated shocks of illness disabled him from being as assiduous an attendant at the bar, as his own inclination, and patience of the most laborious application, would otherwise have made him. Besides the demand for expence, which his valetudinarian habit of body constantly made upon him, he had likewise a family to maintain; from business he derived little or no supplies, and his prospects, therefore, grew every day more gloomy and melancholy. To these discouraging circumstances, if we add the infirmity of his wife, whom he loved tenderly, and the agonies he felt on her account, the measure of his afflictions will be well nigh full. To see her daily languishing and wearing away before his eyes, was too much for a man of his strong sensations; the fortitude of mind, with which he met all the other calamities of life, deserted him on this most trying occasion; and her death, which happened about this time, brought on such a vehemence of grief, that his friends began to think him in danger of losing his reason. When the first emotions of his sorrow were abated, philosophy administered her aid; his resolution returned, and he began again to struggle with his fortune. He engaged in two periodical papers successively, with a laudable and spirited design of rendering service to his

country. The first of these was called the *True Patriot* which was set on foot during the late rebellion, and was conducive to the excitement of loyalty, and a love for the constitution in the breasts of his countrymen. A project of the same kind had been executed in the year 1715, when the nation laboured under the same difficulties, by the celebrated Mr. *Addison*, who afterwards rose to be secretary of state. The *Freeholder*, by that elegant writer, contains, no doubt, many seasonable animadversions, and a delicate vein of wit and raillery: but it may be pronounced with safety, that in the *True Patriot* there was displayed a solid knowledge of the British laws and government, together with occasional sallies of humour, which would have made no inconsiderable figure in the political compositions of an *Addison* or a *Swift*. The *Jacobite* Journal was calculated to discredit the shattered remains of an unsuccessful party, and by a well applied raillery and ridicule to bring the sentiments of the disaffected into contempt, and thereby efface them, not only from the conversation, but the minds of men. How excellently he succeeded in this design, may be felt by the reader, if he will be at the small trouble of turning over the leaves, which close the fourth volume of this edition.

Our Author, by this time, attained the age of forty-three; and being incessantly pursued by reiterated attacks of the gout, he was wholly rendered incapable of pursuing the business of a barrister any longer. He was obliged therefore to accept an office, which seldom fails of being hateful to the populace, and of course liable to many injurious imputations, namely, an acting magistrate in the commission of the peace for *Middlesex*. That he was not inattentive to the calls of his duty, and that, on the contrary, he laboured to be an useful

citizen, is evident from the many tracts he published,* relating to several of the penal laws, and to the vices and mal-practices which those laws were intended to restrain. Under this head will be found several valuable pieces; particularly a charge to the Grand Jury, delivered at Westminster, on the 29th of June, 1749. In this little work, the history of grand juries from their origin, and the wise intention of them for the cognizance of abuse, and the safety of the subject, are thought to be traced with no small skill and accuracy. The pamphlet on the *Increase and cause of Robberies*, has been held in high estimation by some eminent persons who have administered justice in Westminster Hall, and still continue to serve their country in a legislative capacity. It has been already observed, that he left behind him two volumes of Crown Law, and it will not be improper to mention, in this place, a pamphlet entitled, 'A Proposal for the Maintenance of the Poor,' which, though it is not reprinted in this collection, not being deemed of a colour with works of invention and genius, yet it does honour to our Author as a magistrate, as it could not be produced without

* Among these was a pamphlet entitled, 'Examples of the Interposition of Providence in the detection and punishment of Murder, with an Introduction and Conclusion,' 1752. He advertised this repeatedly in his Covent-garden Journal, and appears to have conceived great hopes of its usefulness among the lower orders. The public mind was at that time much disturbed by murders committed with a degree of barbarity neither usual nor characteristic of this country.—The 'Proposal for the Maintenance of the Poor,' noticed by Mr. Murphy, appears to be among the first suggestions of a country work-house, in which the different objects of industry and reformation might be united. He wrote also a pamphlet on the case of Elizabeth Canning, which was answered by Dr. (afterwards Sir John) Hill, between whom and our Author there was a frequent interchange of animosities. See Hill's 'Inspector,' No. 128, a most absurd specimen of self-confidence. C.

intense application, and an ardent zeal for the service of the community.

AMIDST these severe exercises of his understanding, and all the laborious duties of his office, his invention could not lie still, but he found leisure to amuse himself, and afterwards the world, with the History of *Tom Jones*. And now we are arrived at the second grand epoch of Mr. Fielding's genius, when all his faculties were in perfect unison, and conspired to produce a complete work. If we consider *Tom Jones* in the same light in which the ablest critics have examined the *Iliad*, the *Æneid*, and the *Paradise Lost*, namely with a view to the fable, the manners, the sentiments, and the style, we should find it standing the test of the severest criticism, and, indeed, bearing away the envied praise of a complete performance. In the first place, the action has that unity which is the boast of the great models of composition; it turns upon a single event, attended with many circumstances, and many subordinate incidents, which seem, in the progress of the work, to perplex, to entangle, and to involve the whole in difficulties, and lead on the reader's imagination, with an eagerness of curiosity, through scenes of prodigious variety, till at length the different intricacies and complications of the fable are explained, after the same gradual manner in which they had been worked up to a crisis: incident arises out of incident; the seeds of everything that shoots up are laid with a judicious hand, and whatever occurs in the latter part of the story seems naturally to grow out of those passages which preceded, so that, upon the whole, the business, with great propriety and probability, works itself up into various embarrassments, and then afterwards, by a regular series of events, clears itself from all impediments, and brings itself inevitably to a conclusion; like a river which, in its

progress, foams amongst fragments of rocks, and for a while seems pent up by unsurmountable oppositions; then angrily dashes for a while, then plunges under ground into caverns, and runs a subterraneous course, till at length it breaks out again, meanders round the country, and with a clear, placid stream, flows gently into the ocean. By this artful management, our Author has given us the perfection of fable; which, as the writers upon the subject have justly observed, consists in such obstacles to retard the final issue of the whole, as shall at least, in their consequences, accelerate the catastrophe, and bring it evidently and necessarily to that period only, which in the nature of things, could arise from it; so that the action could not remain in suspense any longer, but must naturally close and determine itself. It may be proper to add, that no fable whatever affords, in its solution, such artful states of suspense, such beautiful turns of surprise, such unexpected incidents, and such sudden discoveries, sometimes apparently embarrassing, but always promising the catastrophe, and eventually promoting the completion of the whole. *Vida*, the celebrated critic of Italy, has transmitted down to us, in his Art of Poetry, a very beautiful idea of a well-concerted fable, when he represents the reader of it in the situation of a traveller to a distant town, who, when he perceives but a faint shadowy glimmering of its walls, its spires, its edifices, pursues his journey with more alacrity, than when he cannot see any appearances to notify the place to which he is tending, but is obliged to pursue a melancholy and forlorn road through a depth of vallies, without any object to flatter or to raise his expectation.

Haud aliter, longinqua petit qui fortè viator
Mœnia, si positas altis in collibus arces
Nunc etiam dubias oculis videt, incipit ultrò

Lætior ire viam, placidumque urgere laborem,
Quàm cum nusquam ullæ cernuntur quas adit arces,
Obscurum sed iter tendit convallibus imis.

In the execution of this plan, thus regular and uniform, what a variety of humorous scenes of life, of descriptions, and characters, has our Author found means to incorporate with the principal action; and this too, without distracting the reader's attention with objects foreign to his subject, or weakening the general interest by a multiplicity of episodical events! Still observing the grand essential rule of unity in the design, I believe no author has introduced a greater diversity of characters, or displayed them more fully, or in more various attitudes. *Allworthy* is the most amiable picture in the world of a man who does honour to his species: in his own heart he finds constant propensities to the most benevolent and generous actions, and his understanding conducts him with discretion in the performance of whatever his goodness suggests to him. And though it is apparent that the author laboured this portrait *con amore*, and meant to offer it to mankind as a just object of imitation, he has soberly restrained himself within the bounds of probability, nay, it may be said, of strict truth; as, in the general opinion, he is supposed to have copied here the features of a worthy character still in being.* Nothing can be more entertaining than WESTERN; his rustic manners, his natural undisciplined honesty, his half-enlightened understanding, with the self-pleasing shrewdness which accompanies it, and the bias of his mind to mistaken politics, are all delineated with precision and fine humour. The sisters of those two gentlemen are aptly introduced, and give rise to many agreeable scenes. *Tom Jones* will at all times be a fine

* Ralph Allen, Esq., of Prior Park. Fielding, while writing this novel, lived at Tiverton, in the neighbourhood, and dined every day at Allen's table. Graves's Anecdotes of Allen. C.

lesson to young men of good tendencies to virtue, who yet suffer the impetuosity of their passions to hurry them away. *Thwackum* and *Square* are excellently opposed to each other; the former is a well-drawn picture of a *divine*, who is neglectful of the moral part of his character, and ostentatiously talks of religion and grace; the latter is a strong ridicule of those, who have high ideas of the dignity of our nature, and of the native beauty of virtue, without owing any obligations of conduct from religion. But grace, without practical goodness, and the moral fitness of things, is shewn, with a fine vein of ridicule, to be but a weak principle of action. In short, all the characters down to Partridge, and even to a maid or an hostler at an inn, are drawn with truth and humour: and indeed they abound so much, and are so often brought forward in a dramatic manner, that every thing may be said to be here in action; every thing has MANNERS; and the very manners which belong to it in human life. They look, they act, they speak to our imaginations, just as they appear to us in the world. The SENTIMENTS which they utter, are peculiarly annexed to their habits, passions, and ideas; which is what poetical propriety requires; and, to the honour of the Author, it must be said, that, whenever he addresses us in person, he is always in the interests of virtue and religion, and inspires, in a strain of moral reflection, a true love of goodness and honour, with a just detestation of imposture, hypocrisy, and all specious pretences to uprightness.

THERE is, perhaps, no province of the Comic Muse, that requires so great a variety of style, as this kind of description of men and manners, in which Mr. Fielding so much delighted. The laws of the mock-epic, in which this species of writing is properly included, demand, that, when trivial things are to be represented with a burlesque

air, the language should be raised into a sort of tumour of dignity, that, by the contrast between the ideas and the pomp in which they are exhibited, they may appear the more ridiculous to our imaginations. Of our Author's talent in this way, there are instances in almost every chapter; and were we to assign a particular example, we should refer to the relation of a battle in the *Homerican style*. On the other hand, when matters, in appearance, of higher moment, but, in reality, attended with incongruous circumstances, are to be set forth in the garb of ridicule, which they deserve, it is necessary that the language should be proportionably lowered, and that the metaphors and epithets made use of be transferred from things of a meaner nature, that so the false importance of the object described may fall into a gay contempt. The first specimen of this manner that occurs to me, is in the *Jonathan Wild:* 'For my own part,' says he, 'I confess I look on this death of hanging to be as proper for 'a hero as any other; and I solemnly declare, that, had 'Alexander the Great been hanged, it would not in the 'least have diminished my respect to his memory.' A better example of what is here intended might, no doubt, be chosen, as things of this nature may be found almost every where in Tom Jones, or Joseph Andrews; but the quotation here made will serve to illustrate, and that is sufficient. The mock-epic has likewise frequent occasion for the gravest irony, for florid description, for the true sublime, for the pathetic, for clear and perspicuous narrative, for poignant satire, and generous panegyric. For all these different modes of eloquence, Mr. Fielding's genius was most happily versatile; and his power in all of them is so conspicuous, that he may justly be said to have had the rare skill, required by Horace, of giving to each part of his work its true and proper colouring.

——*Servare vices, operumque colores.*

In this consists the specific quality of fine writing, and thus, our Author being confessedly eminent in all the great essentials of composition, in fable, character, sentiment, and elocution, and as these could not be all united in so high an assemblage without a rich invention, a fine imagination, an enlightened judgment, and a lively wit, we may fairly here decide his character, and pronounce him the ENGLISH CERVANTES.

IT may be added, that in many parts of the *Tom Jones* we find our Author possessed the softer graces of character-painting, and of description; many situations and sentiments are touched with a delicate hand, and throughout the work he seems to feel as much delight in describing the amiable part of human nature, as in his early days he had in exaggerating the strong and harsh features of turpitude and deformity. The circumstance breathes an air of philanthropy through his work, and renders it *an image of truth*, as the Roman Orator calls a comedy. And hence it arose, from this *truth of character* which prevails in Tom Jones, in conjunction with the other qualities of the writer above set forth, that the suffrage of the most learned critic * of this nation was given to our Author, when he says, 'Mons. de Marivaux 'in France, and Mr. Fielding in England, stand the fore-'most among those who have given a faithful and chaste 'copy of *life and manners*, and, by enriching their 'romance with the best part of the comic art, may be said 'to have brought it to perfection.' Such a favourable decision from so able a judge will do honour to Mr. Fielding with posterity; and the excellent genius of the person with whom he has parallelled him will reflect the truest praise on the author who was capable of being his illustrious rival.

* Dr. Warburton.

MARIVAUX possessed rare and fine talents; he was an attentive observer of mankind, and the transcripts he made from thence are the *image of truth.* At his reception into the French Academy he was told in an elegant speech made by the Archbishop of *Sens*, that the celebrated La Bruyère seemed to be revived in him, and to retrace with his pencil those admirable portraits of men and manners, which formerly unmasked so many characters, and exposed their vanity and affectation. *Marivaux* seems never so happy as when he is reprobating the false pretences of assumed characters, the dissimulation of friends, the policy of the ambitious, the littleness and arrogance of the great, the insolence of wealth, the arts of the courtezan, the impertinence of foppery, the refined foibles of the fair sex, the dissipation of youth, the gravity of false importance, the subtleties of hypocrisy and exterior religion, together with all the delicacies of real honour, and the sentiments of true virtue, are delineated by him in a lively and striking manner. He was not contented merely to copy their appearances, he went still deeper, and searched for all the internal movements of their passions with a curiosity that is always penetrating, but sometimes appears over solicitous, and, as the critic expresses it, *ultrà perfectum trahi.* It is not intended by this to insinuate that he exceeds the bounds of truth, but occasionally he seems to refine, till the traces grow minute, and almost imperceptible. He is a painter who labours his portraits with a careful and scrupulous hand; he attaches himself to them with affection; knows not when to give over, *nescivit quod benè cessit, relinquere*, but continues touching and retouching, till his *traits* become so delicate that they at length are without efficacy, and the attention of the connoisseur is tired before the diligence of the artist is wearied. But this refinement of *Marivaux* is apologized for by the

remark of the Ethic Poet, who observes that this kind of enquiry is

> 'Like following life thro' insects we dissect;
> We lose it in the moment we detect.'

If therefore he sometimes seems over curious, it is the nature of the subject that allures him, and, in general, he greatly recompenses us for the unwillingness he shows to quit his work, by the valuable illustrations he gives it, and the delicacy with which he marks all the finer features of the mind. His diction, it must not be dissembled, is sometimes, but not often, far-fetched and strained: and it was even objected to him in the speech, already mentioned, of the *Archbishop of Sens*, that his choice of words was not always pure and legitimate. Each phrase, and often each word, is a sentence; but he was apt to be hazardous and daring in his metaphors, which was observed to him, lest his example, and the connivance of the Academy, which sits in a kind of legislative capacity upon works of taste, should occasion a vicious imitation of the particulars in which he was deemed defective. This criticism *Marivaux* has somewhere attempted to answer, by observing, that he always writes more like a man than an author, and endeavours to convey his ideas to his readers in the same light they struck his own imagination, which had great fecundity, warmth and vivacity. The *Paysan Parvenu* seems to be the *Joseph Andrews* of this Author; and the *Marianne* his higher work, or his *Tom Jones*. They are both, in a very exquisite degree, amusing and instructive. They are not written, indeed, upon any of the laws of composition, promulged by *Aristotle*, and expounded by his followers: his romances begin regularly with the birth and parentage of the principal person, and proceed in a narrative of events, including indeed great variety, and artfully raising and suspending our expectation: they are rather to be called *fictitious biography*, than a comic fable

consisting of a *beginning*, a *middle*, and *end*, where one principal action is offered to the imagination, in its process is involved in difficulties, and rises gradually into tumult and perplexity, till, in a manner unexpected, it works itself clear, and comes, by natural unforeseen incidents, to a termination.

In this last-mentioned particular, *Fielding* boasts a manifest superiority over *Marivaux*. Uniformity amidst variety is justly allowed in all works of invention to be the prime source of beauty, and it is the peculiar excellence of *Tom Jones*. The Author, for the most part, is more readily satisfied in his drawings of character than the French writer; the strong specific qualities of his personages he sets forth with a few masterly strokes, but the nicer and more subtle workings of the mind he is not so anxious to investigate; when the passions are agitated, he can give us their conflicts, and their various transitions, but he does not always point out the secret cause that sets them in motion, or, in the Poet's language, 'the small pebble that stirs the peaceful lake.' Fielding was more attached to the *manners* than to the *heart:* in descriptions of the former, he is admirable; in unfolding the latter he is not equal to *Marivaux*. In the management of his story, he piques and awakens curiosity more strongly than his rival of France; when he interests and excites our affections, he sometimes operates more by the force of situation, than by the tender pathetic of sentiment, for which the author of *Marianne* is remarkable; not that it must be imagined that Fielding wanted these qualities; we have already said the reverse of him; but in these particulars, *Marivaux* has the preference. In point of style he is more unexceptionable than *Marivaux*, the critics never having objected to him, that his figures are forced or unnatural; and in humour the praise of

pre-eminence is entirely his. *Marivaux* was determined to have an air of originality, and therefore disdained to form himself upon any eminent mode of preceding writers; *Fielding* considered the rules of composition as delivered by the great philosophic critic; and finding that Homer had written a work, intitled *Margites*,* which bore the same relation to *comedy*, that the *Iliad* or *Odyssey* does to tragedy, he meditated a plan † conformable to the principles of a well-arranged fable. Were the *Margites* still extant, it would perhaps be found to have the same proportion to this work of our Author, as the sublime epic has to *Telemaque* of *Fenelon*. This was a noble vehicle for humorous description; and to ensure his success in it, with great judgment he fixed his eye upon the style and manner of *Cervantes*, as *Virgil* had done in respect to *Homer*. To this excellent model, he added all the advantages he could deduce from *Scarron* and *Swift;* few or no sprinklings of *Rabelais* being to be found in him. His own strong discernment of the foibles of mankind, and his quick sense of the ridiculous being thus improved, by a careful attention to the works of the great masters of their art, it is no wonder that he has been able to raise himself to the top of the *comic character*, to be admired by readers with the most lively sensations of mirth, and by novel-writers *with a despair that he should ever be emulated with success.*‡

THUS we have traced our Author in his progress, to the time when the vigour of his mind was in its full growth of perfection; from this period it sunk, but by slow degrees, into a decline: *Amelia*, which succeeded

* The best critics are inclined to consider *Margites* as a forgery. C.

† *Vide* the Preface to *Joseph Andrews*.

‡ Half a century has not produced one exception to this opinion. C.

Tom Jones in about four years, has indeed the marks of genius, but of a genius beginning to fall into its decay. The Author's invention in this performance does not appear to have lost its fertility; his judgment, too, seems as strong as ever; but the warmth of imagination is abated; and, in his landscapes or his scenes of life, Mr. Fielding is no longer the colourist he was before.* The personages of the piece delight too much in narrative and their characters have not those touches of singularity, those specific differences, which are so beautifully marked in our Author's former works: of course the humour, which consists in happy delineations of the caprices and predominant foibles of the human mind, loses here its high flavour and relish. And yet *Amelia* holds the same proportion to *Tom Jones*, that the *Odyssey* of *Homer* bears, in the estimation of *Longinus*, to the *Iliad*. A fine

* Those who have seen much, and thought much of the errors and distresses of domestic life, will probably feel that our author's colouring in this work is more just, as well as more chaste, than in any of his other novels. The appeals to the heart are, in my opinion, far more forcible. The whole of Miss Mathews' narrative abounds with exquisite touches of nature and passion; but what may be referred to with most confidence, are Chapter vi. of Book x. and Chapter viii. of Book xi. Where do we find the consequences of imprudence or guilt represented with such irresistible tenderness?—The force of personal prejudice was never perhaps more strikingly displayed than in the sentiments of Richardson and his correspondents on this work.—A Mrs. Donellan says, 'Will you leave us to Captain Booth and Betty Thoughtless for our example? As for poor Amelia, she is so great a fool we pity her, but cannot be humble enough to desire to imitate her.' Richardson, in reply, with characteristic vanity, repeats, 'Will I leave you to Captain Booth? Captain Booth, Madam, has done his business. Mr. Fielding has over written himself, or rather *under*-written: and in his own journal seems ashamed of his last piece: and has promised that the same Muse shall write no more for him. The piece, in short, is as dead as if it had been published forty years ago, as to sale. You guess I have not read Amelia. Indeed I have read but the first volume, &c.!' C.

vein of morality runs through the whole; many of the situations are affecting and tender; the sentiments are delicate; and, upon the whole, it is the *Odyssey*, the moral and pathetic work of Henry Fielding.*

WHILE he was planning and executing this piece, it should be remembered that he was distracted by that multiplicity of avocations, which surround a public magistrate; and his constitution, now greatly impaired and enfeebled, was labouring under attacks of the gout, which were, of course, severer than ever. However, the activity of his mind was not to be subdued. One literary pursuit was no sooner over, than fresh game arose. A periodical paper, under the title of *The Covent Garden Journal, by Sir Alexander Drawcansir, Knight, and Censor General of Great Britain*, was immediately set on foot. It was published twice in every week, *viz.* on *Tuesday* and *Saturday*, and conduced so much to the entertainment of the Public, for a twelvemonth together, that it was at length felt with a general regret, that the Author's health did not enable him to persist in the undertaking any longer. There are, in that collection, many essays of such good sense and fine humour, that they would have been admired in the lucubrations of the *Tatler* or the *Spectator:* and the reader will find them carefully selected and preserved in this edition.† Soon after this work was dropt, our Author's whole frame of body was so entirely shattered by continual inroads of complicated disorders, and the incessant fatigue of business in his office, that,

* *It is proper the reader should be informed that* Amelia, *in this edition, is printed from a copy corrected by the Author's own hand. The exceptionable passages, which inadvertency had thrown out, are here retrenched; and the work, upon the whole, will be found nearer perfection than it was in its original state.*

† Mr. Murphy's copy of this work is now in my possession. I strongly suspect he communicated some articles to it. C.

by the advice of his physician, he was obliged to set out for Lisbon, to try if there was any restorative quality in the more genial air of that climate. Even in this distressful condition, his imagination still continued making its strongest efforts to display itself; and the last gleams of his wit and humour faintly sparkled in the account he left behind him of his voyage to that place. In this his last sketch, he puts us in mind of a person, under sentence of death, jesting on the scaffold; for his strength was now quite exhausted; and, in about two months after his arrival at Lisbon, he yielded his last breath, in the year 1754, and in the forty-eighth year of his age.

He left behind him (for he married a second time) a wife, and four children; three of which are still living, and are now training up in a handsome course of education under the care of their uncle, with the aid of a very generous donation given annually by Ralph Allen, Esq., for that purpose. An instance of humanity, which the reader did not want to learn of him, whose life is a constant effusion of munificence; but, for the sake of the writer, whose works have afforded such exquisite entertainment, he will be glad to know that the generous patron of the father is now the tender guardian of his orphans.*

THUS was closed a course of disappointment, distress, vexation, infirmity, and study; for with each of these his life was variously chequered, and perhaps, in stronger proportions than has been the lot of many. Shall we now, after the manner of the *Egyptian* ritual, frame a public accusation against his memory? or shall we rather suffer him to pass by quietly, and rest in peace among the departed? The former method would gratify malevolence, the more especially if we stated facts with aggravation, or

* Mr. Allen died in 1764, and bequeathed to Mrs. Fielding and her children £100 each. C.

discoloured them by a little misrepresentation, and then, from premises injuriously established, drew, with a pretended reluctance, a few conclusions to the utter destruction of his moral character. But the candid reader will recollect that the charge of venality never ceases to be exhibited against abilities in distress, which was our Author's lot in the first part of his life, and that the first magistrate for Westminster is ever liable to imputations; for an answer to which we refer to a passage in the *Voyage to Lisbon*, and a note annexed to it. 'A predecessor of mine used to boast that he made one 'thousand pounds a year in his office, but how he did 'this (if indeed he did this) is to me a secret. His clerk, 'now mine, told me I had more business than he had 'ever known there; I am sure I had as much as any 'man could do. The truth is, the fees are so very low, 'when they are due, and so much is done for nothing, 'that if a single justice of peace had business enough to 'employ twenty clerks neither he nor they would get 'much for their labour. The public will not therefore, I 'hope, think I betray a secret when I inform them that I 'received from the Government a yearly pension out of 'the public service-money, which I believe, indeed, would 'have been larger had my great patron been convinced 'of an error, which I have heard him utter more than 'once, That he could not indeed say that the acting as a 'principal justice of peace in Westminster was on all 'accounts very desirable, but that all the world knew it 'was a very lucrative office. Now to have shown him 'plainly that a man must be a rogue to make a very little 'this way, and that he could not make much by being as 'great a rogue as he could be, would have required more 'confidence than I believe he had in me, and more of his 'conversation than he chose to allow me; I therefore 'resigned the office, and the farther execution of my

'plan, to my brother, who had long been my assistant. 'And now, lest the case between me and the reader 'should be the same in both instances as it was between 'me and the great man, I will not add another word on 'the subject.' The indignation with which he throws the dishonour from him, will plead in his behalf with every candid mind, more particularly when it is considered as the declaration of a dying man. It will therefore be the more humane and generous office, to set down to the account of slander and defamation a great part of that abuse which was discharged against him by his enemies, in his life-time, deducting, however, from the whole this useful lesson, That quick and warm passions should be early controuled, and that dissipation and extravagant pleasures are the most dangerous palliatives that can be found for disappointments and vexations in the first stages of life. We have seen how Mr. Fielding very soon squandered away his small patrimony, which, with economy, might have procured him independence; we have seen how he ruined, into the bargain, a constitution, which, in its original texture, seemed formed to last much longer. When illness and indigence were once let in upon him, he no longer remained the master of his own actions; and that nice delicacy of conduct which alone constitutes and preserves a character, was occasionally obliged to give away. When he was not under the immediate urgency of want, they, who were intimate with him, are ready to aver that he had a mind greatly superior to any thing mean or little; when his finances were exhausted, he was not the most elegant in his choice of the means to redress himself, and he would instantly exhibit a farce or a puppet-show in the Haymarket theatre, which was wholly inconsistent with the profession he had embarked in. But his intimates can witness how much his pride suffered, when he was forced into measures of this kind;

no man having a juster sense of propriety, or more honourable ideas of the employment of an author and a scholar.

HENRY FIELDING was in stature rather rising above six feet; his frame of body large and remarkably robust, till the gout had broke the vigour of his constitution. Considering the esteem he was in with all the artists, it is somewhat extraordinary that no portrait of him had ever been made. He had often promised to sit to his friend Hogarth, for whose good qualities and excellent genius he always entertained so high an esteem, that he has left us in his writings many beautiful memorials of his affection: unluckily, however, it so fell out that no picture of him was ever drawn; but yet, as if it was intended that some traces of his countenance should be perpetuated, and that too by the very artist whom our Author preferred to all others, after Mr. Hogarth had long laboured to try if he could bring out any likeness of him from images existing in his own fancy, and just as he was despairing of success, for want of some rule to go by in the dimensions and outlines of the face, fortune threw the grand *desideratum* in the way. A lady with a pair of scissors, had cut a profile, which gave the distances and proportions of his face sufficiently to restore his lost ideas of him. Glad of an opportunity of paying his last tribute to the memory of an author whom he admired, Mr. Hogarth caught at this outline with pleasure, and worked with all the attachment of friendship, till he finished that excellent drawing, which stands at the head of this work, and recalls to all, who have seen the original, a corresponding image of the man.

HAD the writer of this Essay the happy power of delineation which distinguished the artist just mentioned, he would here attempt a portrait of Mr. Fielding's mind:

of the principal features, such as they appear to him, he would at least endeavour to give a sketch, however imperfect. His passions, as the poet expresses it, were tremblingly alive all o'er: whatever he desired, he desired ardently; he was alike impatient of disappointment, or ill-usage, and the same quickness of sensibility rendered him elate in prosperity, and overflowing with gratitude at every instance of friendship or generosity: steady in his private attachments, his affection was warm, sincere, and vehement; in his resentments, he was manly, but temperate, seldom breaking out in his writings into gratifications of ill humour, or personal satire. It is to the honour of those whom he loved, that he had too much penetration to be deceived in their characters; and it is to the advantage of his enemies that he was above passionate attacks upon them. Open, unbounded, and social in his temper, he knew no love of money; but, inclining to excess even in his very virtues, he pushed his contempt of avarice into the opposite extreme of imprudence and prodigality. When young in life he had a moderate estate, he soon suffered hospitality to devour it; and when in the latter end of his days he had an income of four or five hundred a-year, he knew no use of money, but to keep his table open to those who had been his friends when young, and had impaired their own fortunes. Though disposed to gallantry by his strong animal spirits, and the vivacity of his passions, he was remarkable for tenderness and constancy to his wife, and the strongest affection for his children. Of sickness and poverty he was singularly patient; and, under the pressure of those evils, he could quickly read *Cicero de Consolatione;* but if either of them threatened his wife, he was impetuous for their relief; and thus often from his virtues arose his imperfections. A sense of honour he had as lively and delicate as most men, but sometimes his passions were too turbulent for it, or

rather its necessities were too pressing; in all cases when delicacy was departed from, his friends knew how his own feelings reprimanded him. The interests of virtue and religion he never betrayed; the former is amiably enforced in his works; and for the defence of the latter, he had projected a laborious answer to the posthumous philosophy of Bolingbroke; and the preparations he had made for it of long extracts and arguments from the fathers and the most eminent writers of controversy, is still extant in the hands of his brother, Sir John Fielding.* In short, our Author was unhappy, but not vicious in his nature; in his understanding lively, yet solid; rich in invention, yet a lover of real science; an observer of mankind, yet a scholar of enlarged reading; a spirited enemy, yet an indefatigable friend; a satirist of vice and evil manners, yet a lover of mankind; an useful citizen, a polished and instructive wit; and a magistrate zealous for the order and welfare of the community which he served.

SUCH was the man, and such the Author, whose works we now offer to the Public. Of this undertaking we shall only say, that the Proprietor was above taking advantage of the Author's established reputation to enhance the price, but studied principally to send it into the world at as cheap a purchase as possible; and the Editor, from the prodigious number of materials before him, was careful, after communicating with the ablest and best of the Author's friends, to reprint every thing worthy of a place in this edition of his works; which is intended, and no doubt will prove, A LASTING MONUMENT OF THE GENIUS OF HENRY FIELDING.

ARTHUR MURPHY.

Lincoln's Inn,
March 25, 1762.

* Sir John died in 1780.

LOVE

IN

SEVERAL MASQUES

A COMEDY

FIRST ACTED IN 1727.

Nec Veneris Pharetris macer est, nec Lampade fervet;
Inde faces ardent; veniunt a dote sagittæ. Juv. Sat. 6.

TO THE

RIGHT HON. THE LADY

MARY WORTLEY MONTAGUE.

MADAM,

YOUR Ladyship's known goodness gives my presumption the hopes of a pardon, for prefixing to this slight work the name of a Lady, whose accurate judgment has long been the glory of her own sex, and the wonder of ours: especially, since it arose from a vanity to which your indulgence, on the first perusal of it, gave birth.

I would not insinuate to the world that this play past free from your censure; since I know it not free from faults, not one of which escaped your immediate penetration. Immediate indeed! for your judgment keeps pace with your eye, and you comprehend almost faster than others overlook.

This is a perfection very visible to all who are admitted to the honour of your conversation; since, from those short intervals you can be supposed to have had to your-

self, amid the importunities of all the polite admirers and professors of wit and learning, you are capable of instructing the pedant, and are at once a living confutation of those morose schoolmen, who would confine knowledge to the male part of the species; and a shining instance of all those perfections and softer graces, which Nature has confined to the female.

But I offend your Ladyship, whilst I please myself and the reader; therefore I shall only beg your leave to give a sanction to this Comedy, by informing the world that its representation was twice honoured with your Ladyship's presence, and am, with the greatest respect,

Madam,

Your Ladyship's most obedient,

Most humble servant,

HENRY FIELDING.

PREFACE.

I BELIEVE few plays have ever adventured into the world under greater disadvantages than this. First, as it succeeded a comedy which, for the continued space of twenty-eight nights, received as great (and as just) applauses, as ever were bestowed on the English Theatre. And secondly, as it is co-temporary with an entertainment which engrosses the whole talk and admiration of the town.

These were difficulties which seemed rather to require the superior force of a WYCHERLEY, or a CONGREVE, than of a raw and unexperienced pen; for I believe I may boast that none ever appeared so early upon the stage. However, such was the candour of the audience, the play was received with greater satisfaction than I should have promised myself from its merit, had it even preceded the PROVOKED HUSBAND.

But after having returned thanks to the spectators, I cannot rest till I have been in some measure grateful to

the performers. As for Mr. Wilks and Mr. Cibber, I cannot sufficiently acknowledge their civil and kind behaviour previous to its representation. How advantageously both they and the other personages set off their respective parts, at that time, has been spoken of by much politer and better judges than myself.

Lastly, I can never express my grateful sense of the good nature of Mrs. Oldfield; who, though she had contracted a slight indisposition by her violent fatigue in the part of Lady Townly, was prevailed on to grace that of Lady Matchless; which placed her in a light so far inferior to that which she had in the other. Nor do I owe less to her excellent judgment, shewn in some corrections, which I shall, for my own sake, conceal. But the ravishing perfections of this lady are so much the admiration of every eye and every ear, that they will remain fixed in the memory of many, when these light scenes shall be forgotten.

PROLOGUE,

OCCASIONED BY THIS COMEDY'S SUCCEEDING THAT OF THE PROVOKED HUSBAND.

SPOKEN BY MR. MILLS.

As when a RAPHAEL's master-piece has been,
By the astonish'd judge, with rapture seen;
Shou'd some young artist next his picture show,
He speaks his colours faint, his fancy low;
Though it some beauties has, it still must fall,
Compar'd to that, which has excell'd in all.
So when, by an admiring, ravish'd age,
A finish'd piece is 'plauded on the stage,
What fate, alas! must a young author share,
Who, deaf to all entreaties, ventures there?
Yet, too, too certain of his weaker cause,
He claims nor equal merit nor applause.
Compare 'em not; should favour do its most,
He owns, by the comparison, he's lost.
Light, airy scenes, his comic muse displays,
Far from the buskin's higher vein he strays,
By humour only catching at the bays:
Humour still free from an indecent flame,
Which, should it raise your mirth, must raise your shame.
Indecency's the bane to ridicule,
And only charms the libertine or fool:
Nought shall offend the fair one's ears to-day,
Which they might blush to hear, or blush to say.
No private character these scenes expose,
Our bard at vice, not at the vicious, throws.
If any by his pointed arrows smart,

Why did he bear the mark within his heart?
Since innocently, thus, to please he aims,
Some merit, surely, the intention claims:
With candour, critics, to his cause attend;
Let pity to his lighter errors bend,
Forgive, at least; but if you can, commend.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Wisemore, ...	MR. MILLS.
Merital, ...	MR. WILKS.
Malvil, ...	MR. BRIDGEWATER.
Lord Formal, . . .	MR. GRIFFIN.
Rattle, ...	MR. CIBBER.
Sir Positive Trap, .	MR. HARPER.
Sir Apish Simple, .	MR. MILLER.

WOMEN.

Lady Matchless, . .	MRS. OLDFIELD.
Vermilia, ...	MRS. PORTER.
Helena, ...	MRS. BOOTH.
Lady Trap, . . .	MRS. MOOR.
Catchit, ...	MRS. MILLS.

SCENE, LONDON.

LOVE

IN

SEVERAL MASQUES.

ACT I. SCENE I.

SCENE, *the Piazza.*

MERITAL, MALVIL.

MERITAL.

Mr. Malvil, good morrow; I thought the spirit of champagne wou'd have lengthen'd your repose this morning.

Malv. No, Sir, the spirit of something else disturbs my mind too much: an unfortunate lover and repose are as opposite as any lover and sense.

Mer. Malapert simile! What is there in life, what joys, what transports, which flow not from the spring of love? The birth of love is the birth of happiness, nay, even of life. To breathe without it is to drag on a dull, phlegmatic, insipid being, and struggle imperfect in the womb of nature.

Malv. What in the name of fustian's here?

Mer. Did you not see the Lady Matchless last night? What ecstacies did she impart, even at a distance, to her beholders!

Malv. A beautiful, rich, young widow, in a front box, makes as much noise as a blazing star in the sky; draws as many eyes on her, and is as much criticised on in the polite world as the other in the learned. With what envious glances was she attacked by the whole circle of belles! and what amorous ones by the gentlemen proprietors of the toupet, snuff-box, and sword knot!

Mer. Nor cou'd all this elevate her to the least pride or haughtiness, but she carried it with an air not conscious of the envy and adoration she contracted. That becoming modesty in her eyes! that lovely, easy sweetness in her smile! that gracefulness in her mien! that nobleness, without affectation, in her looks! in short, that one complete charm in her person! Such a woman as this does as much mischief amongst the men of sense!—

Malv. As some beaus do amongst the women of none. But, by your speaking so feelingly, I should suspect some mischief here. [*Claps* Merital's *breast.*

Mer. Why that fort is not impregnable to the batteries of a fair eye; but there is a certain beautiful, rich, young virgin who keeps guard there.

Malv. Ha, she is a blazing star indeed! Where does she live? or rather, where is she worshipped? and in what street is her temple?

Mer. I have described her, and sure my picture is not so bad as to require its name under it.

Malv. But it is so good that I am afraid you hardly took nature for a pattern.

Mer. Thou art always endeavouring to be satirical on the ladies; pr'ythee desist: for the name of an ill-natured wit will slightly balance the loss of their favour. Who wou'd not prefer a dear smile from a pretty face——

Malv. To a frown from an ugly one. But have I never seen this inestimable?

Mer. No, Sir; the sun has never seen her but by

peeping through a window. She is kept as close as a jealous Spaniard keeps his wife, or a city usurer his treasure; and is now brought to town to be married to that gay knight Sir Apish Simple.

Malv. You have a rival then, there's one difficulty.

Mer. Ay, and many difficulties, which, in love, are so many charms. In the first place, the young lady's guardian, Sir Positive Trap by name, is an old, precise knight, made up of avarice, folly, an ill-bred surliness of temper, and an odd, fantastic pride built on the antiquity of his family, into which he enrols most of the great men he ever heard of. The next is his lady, who is his absolute empress; for though he be monstrously morose to the rest of the world, he is as foolishly easy and credulous to his wife.

Malv. And she, I suppose, is as easy to the rest of the world, as imperious to him.

Mer. Then my mistress is made up of natural spirit, wit, and fire; all these she has improved by an intimate conversation with plays, poems, romances, and such gay studies, by which she has acquired a perfect knowledge of the polite world without ever seeing it, and turned the confinement of her person into the enlargement of her mind. Lastly, my rival,—but his character you know already. And these are my obstacles.

Malv. But what objection does the old knight make to your pretensions?

Mer. Several. My estate is too small, my father was no baronet, and I am——no fool.

Malv. Those are weighty objections, I must confess: to evade the first you must bribe his lawyer, to conquer the second, purchase a title—and utterly to remove the last, plead lover.

Mer. Kindly advised. But what success are you like to reap from that plea with Vermilia?

Malv. Why faith! our affair is grown dull as a chancery suit; but, if it be much more prolix, my stock of love will be so far exhausted, that I shall be like a contested heir, who spends his estate in the pursuit of it, and when his litigious adversary is overthrown, finds his possessions reduced to a long lawyer's bill for more than he is able to pay.

Mer. But then your fates will be different, the one condemned to starve in a prison, the other to surfeit in matrimony. Tho', by what I see, you are in little danger of bringing matters to that issue.

Malv. Hast thou seen? Come, perhaps you have discovered what, indeed, her late coldness gives me reason to fear.

Mer. What?

Malv. A Rival.

Mer. Ha, ha, ha! you certainly are the most unfortunate in your temper, and most an enemy to yourself, of any man in the world. Be assured, Jack, that if, after what has passed between you, so long a service, and so many apparent signs of the sincerest passion on your side and such a manifest reception of it on hers, she jilts you; she yet has rid you of the greatest pest in nature.

Malv. 'Sdeath! could I reason thus with myself, I might think so, but I love her above my reason. I see my folly and despise it, and yet cannot shun it.

Mer. Well, you are the first in the class of romantic lovers. But, for my part, I wou'd as soon turn chymist and search for the philosopher's stone, as a lover to run headlong before an Ignis Fatuus, that flies the faster the more it is pursued.

Malv. These are the known sentiments of you light, gay, fluttering fellows; who, like the weather-cock, never fix long to a point till you are good for nothing.

Mer. And you platonic lovers, like the compass, are ever pointing to the same pole, but never touch it.

Malv. You are a sort of sportsmen, who are always hunting in a park of coquets, where your sport is so plenty that you start fresh game before you have run down the old.

Mer. And you are a sort of anglers ever fishing for prudes, who cautiously steal, and pamper up their vanity with your baits, but never swallow the hook.

Malv. But hast thou then discovered any thing in Vermilia's conduct that——

Mer. That makes me confident you will never gain her, so I advise you to raise the siege; for you must carry that garrison by storm, and, I know, you have not so much bravery in love——Ha, amazement! is not that Wisemore?

SCENE II.

WISEMORE, MERITAL, MALVIL.

Wisem. Mr. Merital, Mr. Malvil, your humble servant; I am fortunate, indeed, at my first arrival, to embrace my friends.

Malv. Dear Wisemore, a thousand welcomes; what propitious wind has drove thee to town?

Wisem. No wind propitious to my inclination, I assure ye, gentlemen; I had taken leave of this place long ago, its vanities, hurries, and superficial, empty, ill digested pleasures.

Mer. But you have seen your error, and, like a relenting nun, who had too rashly taken leave of the world, are returned to enjoy thy pleasures again.

Wisem. No, 'tis business, business, gentlemen, that drags me hither; my pleasures lie another way, a way little known to you gentlemen of the town.

Malv. Not so little known as you imagine, Ned, nor have you been supposed alone these three years in the country. 'Tis no secret that you have had the conversation of——

Wisem. ——The wise, the learned, the virtuous. Books, Sir, have been mostly my companions, a society preferable to that of this age. Who wou'd converse with fools and fops, whilst they might enjoy a Cicero or an Epictetus, a Plato or an Aristotle? Who would waste his afternoon in a coffee house, or at a tea-table, to be entertained with scandal, lies, balls, operas, intrigues, fashions, flattery, nonsense, and that swarm of impertinences which compose the common-place chat of the world? Who would bear all this, did he know the sweets of retirement?

Mer. Let me survey thee a little that I may be certain you are my old friend metamorphosed, and no apparition.

Wisem. Look ye, Sirs, of all places in the world my spirit would never haunt this. London is to me what the country is to a gay, giddy girl, pampered up with the love of admiration; or a young heir just leapt into his estate and chariot. It is a mistress, whose imperfections I have discovered, and cast off. I know it; I have been a spectator of all its scenes. I have seen hypocrisy pass for religion, madness for sense, noise and scurrility for wit, and riches for the whole train of virtues. Then I have seen folly beloved for its youth and beauty, and reverenced for its age. I have discovered knavery in more forms than ever Proteus had, and traced him through them all, 'til I have lodged him behind a counter, with the statute of bankruptcy in his hand, and a pair of gilded horns in his pocket.

Mer.
Malv. } Ha, ha, ha!

Wisem. I know the folly, foppery, and childishness of your diversions——I know your vices too.

Malv. And hast practised them to my knowledge.

Wisem. So much the more have they contracted my hate. Oons! If I do not get out of this vile town in three days, I shall get out of the world in four.

Mer. But what earnest business has drove thee hither now, so much against thy will.

Malv. He is married, his wife has drawn him hither, and he is jealous.

Mer. Or are you in law, and have been rid down this morning by a fat serjeant or solicitor?

Malv. He has been writing philosophy, and is come to town to publish it.

Wisem. I have been studying folly, and am come to town to publish it. I know that title will sell any productions, or some of your modern poets, who hardly merit that name by their works, wou'd merit it by starving.

Mer. But they deal not so openly with the world, for they promise much tho' they perform little. Nay, I've sometimes seen treatises where the author has put all his wit in the title page.

Wisem. Why, faith, and politic enough; for few readers now look farther than the title page.

Mer. But pr'ythee what is this errand of folly, as you are pleased to term it.

Wisem. O beyond conception; I shudder with the apprehension of its being known. But why do I fear it? folly or vice must be of a prodigious height to over-top the crowd; but if it did, the tall, overgrown monster would be admired, and, like other monsters, enrich the possessor. I see your women have gone through with the transformation and dress like us, nay, they frequent coffee-houses too; I was frightened from one just now by two girls in paduasuay coats and breeches.

Malv. Ha, ha, ha! these were two beaus, Ned.

Wisem. So much the greater transformation, for they had, apparently, more of the woman than the man about them. But, perhaps, by them this amphibious dress may be a significant calculation; for I have known a beau with everything of a woman but the sex, and nothing of a man besides it.

Malv. They will esteem you for that assertion.

Wisem. Why ay, it may recommend them to the tea tables. For the natural perfections of our sex, and the unnatural acquisitions of her own, must be a rare compound to make a woman's idol.

Mer. Sure, never was a man so altered! Do not affect singularity this way; for in town we look on none to be so great a fool as a philosopher, and there is no fool so out of fashion.

Wisem. A certain sign fools are in fashion. Philosophy is a true glass, which shews the imperfections of the mind as plain as the other of the body; and no more than a true glass, can be agreeable to a town constitution.

Mer. So, here comes one who will hit your taste——

SCENE III.

To them, RATTLE.

Rattle. Merital, Malvil, a buss, dear boys. Ha! hum! what figure is that?

Mer. Mr. Rattle, pray know my friend, Mr. Wisemore.

Rattle. That I will gladly. Sir, I am your most obedient, humble servant, Sir.

Wisem. Sir, I am very much yours.

Rattle. Well, I know you will be witty upon me, but

since the town will blab, I will put on the armour of assurance, and declare boldly, that I am very, very deeply in love.

Malv. A bold declaration, indeed! and what may require some assurance to maintain, since it is ten to four thou hast never spoke to this new mistress, nay, perhaps, never seen more of her than her picture.

Rattle. Her picture! ha, ha, ha! who can draw the sun in its meridian glories? Neither painting, poetry, nor imagination can form her image. She is young and blooming as the spring, gay and teeming as the summer, ripe and rich as the autumn.

Malv. Thy chymistry has from that one virtue extracted all the rest, I very modestly suppose.

Mer. You know, Harry, Malvil allows the sex no virtues.

Rattle. That's because they allow him no favours. But to express my mistress's worth, in a word, and prove it too—She is the Lady Matchless.

Wisem. Ha! [*Aside.*

Mer. But what hopes can you have of succeeding against the multitudes which swarm in her drawing-room?

Rattle. Pugh! Tom, you know I have succeeded against greater multitudes before now——and she is a woman of excellent sense.

Wisem. You fix your hopes on a very sound foundation, Sir; for a woman of sense will, undoubtedly, set a just value on a laced coat, which qualification is undeniably yours.

Rattle. Sir, as I take it, there are other qualifications appertaining to——

Wisem. But none preferable in the eyes of some women, and the persons of some men, Sir.

Rattle. I believe she will find some preferable in the person of your humble servant, Sir.

Wisem. Say you so! then know, Sir, I am your rival there.

Rattle. Rival, Sir! and do you think to supplant me, Sir?

Wisem. I think to maintain my ground, Sir.

Mer. And is this the folly you are come to town to publish? For a philosopher to go a widow-hunting is folly with a vengeance.

Wisem. [*Aside.*] Am I become a jest? I deserve it. Why did I come hither, but to be laughed at by all the world! my friends will deride me out of love, my enemies out of revenge; wise men from their scorn, and fools from their triumph, to see me become as great a fool as themselves. [*To them.*] I see, by your mirth, gentlemen, my company grows tedious, so I'm your humble servant.

SCENE IV.

MERITAL, MALVIL, RATTLE.

Mer. Nay, dear Ned.

Rattle. What queer bundle of rusticity is that?

Mer. A man of admirable sense, I assure you. Your hopes in the widow now are not worth much.

Rattle. Pugh! there's a rival indeed! besides, I am sensible that I am the happy he whom she has chosen out of our whole sex. She is stark mad in love, poor soul! and let me alone when I have made an impression. I tell ye, Sirs, I have had opportunities, I have had encouragements, I have had kisses and embraces, lads; but, mum. Now if you tell one word, devil take me, if ever I trust you with a secret again.

Malv. You will pardon me, Harry; but if I believe one word of it, may I never know a secret again.

Rattle. I am glad of that; my joy makes me blab, but it may be for the lady's honour not to have it believ'd.

Malv. Ay, faith, and for the honour of her sense too.

Rattle. I pumped Sir Apish, as you desired; it seems, all matters are agreed on with the old folks, he has nothing now but to get his mistress's own consent.

Malv. That's only a form; Miss says *yes* now after her father, as readily as after the parson.

Rattle. Well, well, I thank fate my mistress is at her own disposal.

Mer. And did you not tell Sir Apish I was his rival? you can keep a secret?

Rattle. O inviolably to serve a friend, and provided there be an intrigue in the case. I love intrigues so well, I almost think myself the son of one.

Malv. And to publish them so well, that had you been so and known it, your supposed father wou'd have known his blessing, and the world his title.

Rattle. But why shou'd you think I can't keep a secret? Now, upon my honour, I never publish any one's intrigues but my own.

Malv. And your character is so public, that you hurt nobody's name but your own.

Rattle. Nay, curse take me, if I am ashamed of being publicly known to have an affair with a lady, at all.

Malv. No? but you should be ashamed of boasting of affairs with ladies, whom it is known you never spoke to.

Mer. There you are too hard on him, for Rattle has affairs.

Rattle. And with women of rank.

Malv. Of very high rank, if their quality be as high as their lodgings are.

Rattle. Pr'ythee, Malvil, leave this satirical, ill-natur'd way, or, upon my word, we pretty fellows shall not care to be seen in your company.

Mer. You must excuse him, he is only envious of your success; and as the smiles of a mistress raise your gaiety, so the frowns of a mistress cause his spleen.

Rattle. Do they? But you and I, Tom, know better: for, curse me, if it be in the power of the frowns of the whole sex to give me an uneasy moment. Neither do I value their smiles at a pinch of snuff. And yet, I believe I have as few of the first, and as many of the last, as——

Mer. How! how! not value the widow's smiles?

Rattle. Humph! they are golden ones.

Malv. Here's a rogue would persuade us he is in love, and all the charms he can find in his mistress are in her pocket.

Rattle. Agad, and that opinion is not singular. I have known a fine gentleman marry a rich heiress with a vast deal of passion, and bury her at the month's end with a perfect resignation.

Malv. Then this resignation seems to me much more apparent than his passion.

Rattle. You fix his passion on the wrong object: it was her fortune he was so violently enamour'd with, and had that been demanded of him, agad, he would have had no more resignation than a lawyer to refund his fee.

Mer. I am of Rattle's opinion; for if this was not the general notion, how would some celebrated toasts maintain their *éclat* who, considered out of the light of their fortune, have no more charms than beau Grin out of his embroidery?

Rattle. Or my lady Wrinkle out of her paint.

Mer. And again, others be neglected who have every charm but wealth. In short, beauty is now considered as a qualification only for a mistress, and fortune for a wife.

Malv. The ladies are pretty even with us, for they have learned to value good qualities only in a gallant, and to look for nothing but an estate in a husband.

Rattle. These are rare sentiments in a platonic lover.

Mer. Well put. How can a man love, who has so ill an opinion of the sex?

Malv. Merital, you are always touching the wounds of your friends, which are too tender to endure it.

Mer. Well, gentlemen, are you for the Mall this morning.

Rattle. With all my heart.

Malv. I have business, but will meet you there.

Rattle. Gad, that's well thought on, I must call on some ladies, but they lie in our way.

Malv. Ay, your ladies commonly lie in every body's way.

Mer. You will find me in the Mall, or at St. James's.

SCENE V.

MERITAL, LORD FORMAL.

Mer. Ha! here's a fool coming, and he is unavoidable. My lord, your humble servant; to see you at this end of the town is a miracle, at so early an hour.

L. Form. Why, positively, Mr. Merital, this is an hour wherein I seldom make any excursions farther than my drawing-room. But, being a day of business, I have rid down two brace of chairmen this morning. I have been, Sir, at three milliners, two perfumers, my bookseller's, and a fan-shop.

Mer. Ha, ha, ha! a very tiresome circuit.

L. Form. It has exagitated my complexion to that exorbitancy of vermeille, that I shall hardly have reduced it to any tolerable consistency under a fortnight's course of acids.

Mer. I think, my lord, it is hardly worth while to be concerned about natural colours, now we are arrived at such a perfection in artificial.

L. Form. Pardon me. We have indeed, made some progress in red, but for your pale colours, they must be

acquired naturally; your white washes will not subdue cherry cheeks.

Mer. O if that be the malady, I wou'd prescribe to the gentlemen a course of rakery, and to the ladies a course of vapours.

L. Form. Well, positively, going into a bookseller's shop is to me the last of fatigues, and yet it is a necessary one: for since the ladies have divided their time between cards and reading, a man, to be agreeable to them, must understand something of books, as well as quadrille.

Mer. I am afraid, if this humour continue, it will be as necessary in the education of a pretty gentleman to learn to read, as to learn to dance.

L. Form. Why, I'll tell you how I do. By going to a bookseller's shop once a month, I know the titles and authors of all the new books: so when I name one in company, it is, you know, of consequence supposed I have read it; immediately some lady pronounces sentence, either favourable, or not, according as the fame of the author, and her ladyship's cards run high or low,—— then good manners enrol me in her opinion.

Mer. A very equitable court of justice truly.

L. Form. Reading, Sir, is the worst thing in the world for the eyes; I once gave into it, and had in a very few months gone through almost a dozen pages in Cassandra. But I found it vastly impaired the lustre of my eyes. I had, Sir, in that short time, perfectly lost the direct ogle ——But I lose time——for I am going to make a visit just by——a——I presume, you hear that I intend shortly to quarter my coat of arms.

Mer. The world, my lord, is rather amazed how my Lord Formal has so long withstood such temptations.

L. Form. Why truly I have had as many temptations as any man. But I have ever laid it down as a maxim, that a wife should be very rich. Men who do not know

the world will talk of virtue and beauty. Now, in my opinion, virtue is so scarce, it is not worth the looking after; and beauty so common, it is not worth the keeping.

Mer. Do you think a fine woman so trifling a possession, my lord?

L. Form. Why a fine woman——is a very fine thing ——and so——is a fine house, I mean to entertain your friends with: for they, commonly, enjoy both, with the additional pleasure of novelty, whilst they pall on your own taste.

Mer. This from you, my lord, is surprising. Sure, you will allow some women to be virtuous.

L. Form. O yes. I will allow an ugly woman to be as virtuous as she pleases, just as I will a poor man to be covetous. But beauty in the hands of a virtuous woman, like gold in those of a miser, prevents the circulation of trade.

Mer. It is rather like riches in the possession of the prudent. A virtuous woman bestows her favours on the deserving, and makes them a real blessing to the man who enjoys her; whilst the vicious one, like a squandering prodigal, scatters them away; and, like a prodigal, is often most despised by those to whom she has been most kind.

L. Form. This from the gay Mr. Merital, is, really, very surprising.

Mer. Yes, my Lord, the gay Mr. Merital now stands candidate for a husband. So you cannot wonder that I wou'd persuade the ladies of my good principles, which may engage some or other to chuse me.

L. Form. It will as soon engage a country borough to chuse you parliament-man. But I must take an abrupt leave. For the sweetness of your conversation has perfumed my senses to the forgetfulness of an affair, which,

being of consequential essence, obliges me to assure you that I am your humble servant.

SCENE VI.

MERITAL *alone.*

Prince of coxcombs! 'sdeath! 'tis in the mouths of such fellows as these that the reputations of women suffer; for women are like books. Malice and envy will easily lead you to the detection of their faults; but their beauties good judgment only can discover and good nature relish. And woman, that noble volume of our greatest happiness,

Which to the wise affords a rich repast,
Fools only censure from their want of taste.

ACT II. SCENE I.

SCENE, LADY MATCHLESS'S *House.*

LADY MATCHLESS, VERMILIA.

LADY MATCHLESS.

UPON my word, Vermilia, you wrong me, if you think noise, equipage, or flattery give me any real pleasure; it is, indeed, a pleasing triumph for a prisoner eloped to reflect on her past confinement and present freedom; freed from that torment, an injurious husband: one who——but he is gone, and, I hope, to heaven.

Verm. That's a generous wish, my dear; and yet I believe it is the wish of many whose husbands deserve a worse place.

La. Match. You mean, during the life of a bad husband; but those prayers, then, flow more from self-interest than generosity; for who wou'd not wish her spouse in heaven, when it was the only way to deliver herself out of a hell?

Verm. True, indeed. But yours are the efforts of pure good nature; you pray for the happiness of your tyrant, now you are delivered out of his power.

La. Match. Ah! poor man! since I can say nothing to his advantage, let him sleep in peace; my revenge shall not be on his memory, but his sex; that part of it which I know would follow his example, were they but in his place.

Verm. You have opportunities enough of revenge, and objects enough to execute it upon; for, I think, you have as many slaves in your assemblies as the French king in his galleys.

La. Match. Why, really, I sometimes look on my drawing-room as a little parliament of fools, to which every different body sends its representatives. Beaus of all sorts. The courtly lord, who addresses me with a formal, well-bred dissimulation; the airy Sir Plume, who always walks in the minuet-step, and converses in recitativo.

Verm. And is a Narcissus in everything but beauty.

La. Match. Then the robust warrior, who proceeds by way of storm or siege. The lawyer, who attacks me as he would a jury, with a cringe, and a lie at the tip of his tongue. The cit, who would cheat me by way of bargain and sale. And—your settling country 'squire, who would put my life into half his estate, provided I would put his whole family's into all mine.

Verm. There is a more dangerous, tho' a more ridiculous fool than any of these, and that is a fine gentleman, who becomes the disguise of a lover worse than any you have named.

La. Match. O, ay; a man of sense acts a lover just as a Dutchman wou'd a harlequin. He stumbles at every straw we throw in his way, which a fop wou'd skip over with ease.

Verm. But pray, my dear, what design have you in view from all these lovers?

La. Match. The very design nature had when she formed them, to make fools of them.

Verm. But you will not be surprised if I admire that you give the least encouragement to the finest gentlemen.

La. Match. Indeed, I approve your remark. Why, it proceeds from this reason; that of love, like other fevers, is only dangerous to a rich constitution, and therefore I am cautious of giving a distemper which I do not intend to cure—for I have no absolute intention ever to marry again.

Verm. Nor absolute resolution against it, I dare swear.

La. Match. To say the truth, I cannot positively affirm I have, nor, if I had, am I confident I shou'd be able to keep it. For when Sir William died I made a secret resolution never to run a second hazard; but—a—at the year's end, I don't know how—a—I had like to have fallen into the snare again.

Verm. Well, and by what lucky chance delivered?

La. Match. The very night before our intended marriage I flew away to London, and left my poor, disappointed swain to vent his passion to the wind.

Verm. O what a profusion was there of sighs, vows, prayers, oaths, tears, and curses!—And so you are fled to London as a place of security against love-debts? I know not why it is, but certainly a woman is the least liable to play the fool here; perhaps the hurry of diversions and company keep the mind in too perpetual a motion to let it fix on one object. Whereas, in the

country our ideas are more fixed and more romantic. Courts and cities have few heroes or heroines in love.

La. Match. Ah, Vermilia, let the jealous husband learn from me; there is more danger in woods and purling streams than in an assembly or a playhouse. When a beauteous grove is your theatre, a murmuring cascade your music, nature's flow'ry landscapes your scene, heaven only the spectator, and a pretty fellow the actor——the Lord knows what the play will be.

Verm. But I hope this five months' absence has restored you to a perfect Statu quo.

La. Match. Had he pursued his conquest then, I am afraid I shou'd have fallen before him, but he has given resolution time to rally, and I am now so fortified against him that all his attacks would prove in vain.

Verm. Be not too confident, for I have heard military men say, that a garrison, to be secure, shou'd have its works well mann'd as well as strong.

SCENE II.

To them CATCHIT.

Catch. Madam, your ladyship's coach is at the door.

La. Match. Come, my dear, by this, I believe, the Park begins to fill.

Verm. I am ready to wait on you, my dear. Catchit, if Mr. Malvil comes, you may tell him where I'm gone.

Catch. Yes, Madam.

SCENE III.

CATCHIT *alone.*

Well, sure nature has not a more ridiculous creature than a jealous lover. Never did a lady in my profession

get more by forging smiles and favourable expressions from a mistress, than I, by making Mr. Malvil believe mine values him less than she does. He has promised me a diamond ring to discover his rival. Ay, but how shall I discover his rival, when he has none? Hum! suppose I make him one! Ay, but that may make mischief; well, but that must make for me. Well then. But who shall this rival be? Ha! Mr. Merital is a favourite of my lady, and is often here. There is an appointment too between him and Helena to meet here at five——my lady will be at home too. Now if I cou'd but persuade Malvil that that assignation was meant with him.

[*Stands considering.*

SCENE IV.

MALVIL, CATCHIT.

Malv. Your servant, pretty Mrs. Catchit. What is that pretty head of yours meditating on?

Catch. Whatever it be, Sir, it is for your service; you will be the death of me, you will. I am always contriving, and plotting, and studying, and lying, and swearing, for you.

Malv. And you shall see no end of my gratitude.

Catch. Nor no beginning either, I am afraid: you are in my debt at least five hundred pound at the rate of a guinea a perjury: if I had carried them to Westminster-hall I had made a better bargain.

Malv. Let me enjoy that dear cold mistress of thine, and thou shalt be paid.

Catch. I fear that's an uncertain condition.

Malv. Ha! what say you?

Catch. Why, Sir, I say that——I say, Sir, that you have the prettiest ring on your finger there.

Malv. S'death! do not torture me.

Catch. It sparkles so sweetly.

Malv. Come, you have discovered something. I have a rival then. Vermilia is a jilt.

Catch. Yes, marry, have you.

Malv. Be quick, dear tormentor.

Catch. Well, it is the prettiest ring I ever saw.

Malv. Here, take it, take anything, tell me but all thou knowest.

Catch. O your servant, Sir; well, you are a charming man, and one can deny you nothing. I have made such a discovery.

Malv. O dear, dear rogue!

Catch. This very morning, has my lady been praising a certain gentleman with such raptures; running him over from head to foot with so much admiration and fondness! then every now and then, Catchit, (says she) don't you think him an angel? Hum! a very dark one (says I). Did you ever see such eyes, such teeth, such a mouth? (says she). In my opinion, they are all very poor (says I). Then such a shape! such an air (says she)! Why, ay, the man wou'd do for a dancing-master (says I). Lud! Madam, (says I) wou'd you wou'd think of poor Mr. Malvil. (And, to be sure, the tears stood in my eyes when I said it.) Oh no (says she), I will think of none but Merital. Then (says I)——

Malv. Torments and furies! Merital!

Catch. My mistress doats on him, and has appointed to meet him.

Malv. How? where? when?

Catch. Here, at five.

Malv. 'Sdeath! 'tis impossible.

Catch. It may be impossible, perhaps; but it is true.

Malv. Merital a villain! Vermilia a jilt, then the whole world's an allusion.

[*Walks and speaks disorderly.*

D'ye hear; do not disclose a word of this to any one.

Catch. You may depend on me, Sir.

Malv. But where's Vermilia?

Catch. Gone to the Park with Lady Matchless.

Malv. Be secret, and be diligent, and you shall not repent your pains.

Catch. Not whilst you have jealousy in your head, and money in your pocket, Signior. Well, how this affair will end I know not; but I am sure the beginning has been good. [*Kisses the ring.*

SCENE V.

SCENE, SIR POSITIVE TRAP'S *House.*

LADY TRAP, HELENA.

Hel. To be sold! to be put up at auction! to be disposed of, as a piece of goods, by way of bargain and sale.

La. Trap. Niece, niece, you are dealt with as a piece of rich goods; you are to be disposed of at a high price; Sir Positive understands the world, and will make good conditions for you. You will have a young gentleman, and a pretty gentleman.

Hel. Yes; if a good estate can make a pretty gentleman.

La. Trap. Sooner than a pretty gentleman can make a good estate. The pretty gentlemen of our age know better how to spend, than to get one.

Hel. Well, well, Madam, my own fortune is sufficient to make the man I love happy. And he shall be one whose merit is his only riches, not whose riches are his only merit.

La. Trap. The man you love! O impudence! I would be ashamed, was I a young woman, to be even thought to have an indecent passion for a particular young fellow.

Hel. I would, indeed, be ashamed, was I an old woman, to be known to have an indecent passion for all fellows in general.

La. Trap. Audacious! dare you reflect on me! on me for fellows! who am notorious for my abhorrence of that beastly sex. The young women of our age, really, are enough to put one out of countenance.

Hel. Youth, Madam, always will put age out of countenance in beauty, as age will youth in wisdom; therefore pray, aunt, don't you pretend to the one, and I'll resign all pretensions to the other.

La. Trap. Do you think you have so much beauty then, Miss?

Hel. I think I have enough to do so small an execution; and, I am sure, I have enough to please myself, and him I desire to please; let the rest of the world think what they will, 'tis not worth my care; I have no ambition to be toasted in every company of men, and roasted in every assembly of women: for the envy of women is a necessary consequence of the admiration of the men.

SCENE VI.

To them, SIR POSITIVE TRAP.

Sir Pos. What lie are you telling? ha!

La. Trap. Justify me, deary, justify me; your niece says I have an indecent passion for your whole sex.

Sir Pos. That I will, by the family of the Traps. So far from that, hussy, she hates our whole sex; she has hardly a decent passion for her own husband, because he's a man.

Hel. You have hit the nail on the head, my dear uncle.

Sir Pos. Hussy, hussy, you are a disgrace to the family of the Traps. I can hardly believe Sir Nicodemus Trap to have been your grandfather, Sir Gregory your father, and Sir Positive your uncle.

Hel. Surfeiting genealogy! ha, ha, ha!

Sir Pos. Do you ridicule your ancestors, the illustrious race of Traps?

Hel. No, Sir: I honour them so far that I am resolved not to take a fool into the family.

Sir Pos. Do you mean Sir Apish, minx? Do you call a baronet a fool, and one of so ancient a house? Hussy, the Simples and the Traps are the two ancientest houses in England. Don't provoke me, don't provoke me, I say; I'll send for Sir Apish immediately: and you shall be wedded, bedded, and executed in half an hour.

Hel. Indeed! executed? O barbarous!

Sir Pos. These girls love plain-dealing. She wants it *in puris naturalibus.* [*Half aside.*

La. Trap. Had you heard her just now, you wou'd have thought her ripe for anything; I protest she made me blush.

Sir Pos. O monstrous! make my lady wife blush!

Hel. She who did that, I am sure, was ripe for any thing.

Sir Pos. Hussy, you are no Trap; you have nothing of the Traps in you. The midwife put a cheat on Sir Gregory.

La. Trap. I have wonder'd how a creature of such principles cou'd spring up in a family so noted for the purity of its women.

Sir Pos. She shall change her name to-morrow; prepare to receive Sir Apish, for this is the last day of your virginity.

Hel. Do you look on my consent as unnecessary then? for he has never made any addresses to me.

Sir Pos. Addresses to you! Why I never saw my lady there 'til an hour before our marriage. I made my addresses to her father, her father to his lawyer, the lawyer to my estate, which being found a Smithfield equivalent——the bargain was struck. Addressing quotha! What need have young people of addressing, or any thing, till they come to undressing?

La. Trap. Ay, this courtship is an abominable, diabolical practice, and the parent of nothing but lies and flattery. The first who used it was the Serpent to beguile Eve.

Sir Pos. Oons! and it hath beguiled above half the women since. I hope to see the time, when a man may carry his daughter to market with the same lawful authority as any other of his cattle. But for you, Madam, to-morrow's your wedding-day; I have said it, and I am positive.

Hel. Yes. But know, uncle of mine, that I am a woman, and may be as positive as you; and so your servant.

La. Trap. After her, honey; don't leave her to herself in this rage.

Sir Pos. I'll bring her to herself, by the right-hand of the Traps.

SCENE VII.

LADY TRAP *alone.*

If Helena be Sir Simple's to-morrow, I have but this day for my design on Merital. Some way he must know my love. But shou'd he reject it, and betray me? Why, if he does 'tis but denying it bravely, and my reserv'd behaviour has raised me such a reputation of virtue that

he wou'd not be believed. Yet how to let him know? Shou'd I write! that were too sure a testimony against me; and yet that's the only way. My niece goes to Lady Matchless's this evening; I'll make him an assignation, in her name, to meet by dark in the dining-room. But how to make it in her name? [*Pauses.*] Ha! I have thought of a way, and will about it instantly.

SCENE VIII.

HELENA *and* SIR POSITIVE TRAP.

Hel. Don't teaze me so, dear uncle. I can never like a fool, I abhor a fop.

Sir Pos. But there are three thousand pounds a year, and a title; do you abhor those, hussy?

Hel. His estate I don't want, and his title I despise.

Sir Pos. Very fine! very fine! Despise a title! Hussy, you are no Trap. Oons! I believe you are no woman either. What, wou'd you take a scandalous, sneaking Mister? one who can't make you a lady?

Hel. Since nothing else will do, I am engaged by all the strength of vows and honour.

Sir Pos. Engaged? Why, was not the widow Jilt engaged to Mr. Goodland, and left him immediately on the arrival of Sir Harry Rich, whom she left again for my Lord Richmore? Never tell me of engagements, contracts, and I don't know what. Mere bug-bears, to frighten children with; all women of sense laugh at them. You are no more obliged to stand to your word when you have promised a man than when you have refused him. The law dissolves all contracts without a valuable consideration; or, if it did not, a valuable consideration would dissolve the law.

Hel. Perhaps, Sir, I'll never marry at all.

Sir Pos. Hussy, hussy, you have a sanguine constitution. You will either marry or do worse.

Hel. In my opinion, I can't do worse than to marry a fool.

Sir Pos. A very fine notion indeed!—I must sell her soon, or she will go off but as a piece of second-hand goods. [*Aside.*

SCENE IX.

To them, LADY TRAP *with a letter.*

La. Trap. Oh, my dear, see what good luck has presented us with. A letter from your niece to Merital.

SIR POSITIVE *reads.*

'DEAR SIR,

'This afternoon my uncle will be abroad, to-morrow I am intended 'for Sir Apish. I need say no more than at six this evening you will 'find, in the dining-room, yours,

'HELENA.

'P.S. I shall be alone, and in the dark; ask no questions, but 'come up directly.'

But, deary, this is not her hand.

La. Trap. Do you think, child, she would not disguise it as much as possible?

Sir Pos. I smell it. I see it. I read it. 'Tis her hand with a witness. See here, thou vile daughter of Sir Gregory. An assignation to a man.

Hel. Insupportable! to confront me with a forgery!

Sir Pos. Your own forgery, hussy.

La. Trap. But, really, it does not look very like her hand.

Sir Pos. Let me see, hum! 'tis not exactly, very, very like. Methinks, 'tis not like at all.

[*Looking through spectacles.*

La. Trap. This may be some counterfeit. I wou'd engage my honour she is innocent. Copy it over before your uncle, my dear, that will be a conviction.

Sir Pos. Copy it over before Sir Positive, hussy.

Hel. Bring pen, ink, and paper there. You shall not have the least pretence to accuse me.

Sir Pos. I would not have thee guilty for the world. I wou'd not have such a disgrace fall on our noble and ancient family. It might render us ridiculous to every upstart. [*Here a servant brings pen*, &c., Helena *writes.*]

La. Trap. O horrible! write to a man! had I held a pen, at her age, with that design, my hand wou'd have shook so that I should have spilt my ink with the bare apprehension.

Hel. Now, Sir, be convinced, and justify me.

[*Giving the letter with the copy to* Sir Pos.

Sir Pos. There is, indeed, no resemblance.

La. Trap. Are you blind? they are both alike to a tittle. [*Taking them.*

Sir Pos. To a dot. Her hand to a dot. I'll send for Sir Apish immediately. I smell it, a rank plot! I smell it.

Hel. You have out-faced me bravely before Sir Positive. You may not, perhaps, do so before an impartial judge.

SCENE X.

LADY TRAP *alone.*

It is strange that women should contend for wit in a husband, when they may enjoy such an advantage from having a fool.

SCENE XI.

SCENE, *St. James's Park.*

LADY MATCHLESS, VERMILIA, MERITAL, RATTLE.

Mer. Indeed, Vermilia, it is very barbarous in you to torment poor Malvil so. Don't you think, if you shou'd drive him to any desperate extremity, you wou'd have a great deal to answer for? And I assure you, by words he has lately dropt, I fear he has some such design.

Rattle. Don't you imagine, widow, that an humble servant of yours is in as much danger?

La. Match. If he be, I wish him a safe deliverance.

Verm. Wou'd he have me believe him mad enough to run his neck into one noose, because I am not mad enough to run mine into a worse. No, no. You all use those words, ropes, daggers, swords and pistols, only as embellishments of speech; or, if you have any design by them, it is to frighten us, not injure yourselves.

La. Match. But I am resolved not to be alarmed with threats. Let me see a gallant fairly swinging—And then —I'll say, poor Strephon, alas! he did love.

Mer. You might justly say, he had more love than reason.

Verm. Why do you attempt then to persuade us into so despicable an opinion of your reason?

Mer. Malvil says, that's the surest way to your love: and that the lower we are in your opinion of our sense the higher we are in your favour. He compares those to two scales, of which as the one rises the other falls.

La. Match. And, upon my word, he is in the right;

for who expects wit in a lover, any more than good music in an English opera, or common sense in an Italian one!——They are all three absolute farces—Not but I wou'd have the creature be a little rational, and able to divert one in the sullenness of a monkey or a paroquet; so as to sing half a favourite song, or read a new play, or fill up a party at quadrille.

Mer. As a chair does at a country dance, or a country-justice a chair at a quarter-sessions.

La. Match. Right. A lover, when he is admitted to cards, ought to be solemnly silent, and observe the motions of his mistress. He must laugh when she laughs, sigh when she sighs. In short, he shou'd be the shadow of her mind. A lady, in the presence of her lover, shou'd never want a looking-glass; as a beau, in the presence of his looking-glass, never wants a mistress.

Mer. Since a lover is such a ridiculous thing, Madam, e'en turn one into a husband.

La. Match. Ah! the very name throws me into the vapours——

Rattle. It is a receipt which has cured many a vapoured lady of my acquaintance.

Mer. But, Lady Matchless, what wou'd you say to a lover who shou'd address himself to your reason, and try to convince you of the principal end in the formation of woman, and the benefits of matrimony: from the lights of nature and religion disclose to you the system of platonic love, and draw his pretensions from his wisdom, and his arguments from his philosophy.

La. Match. If he had more philosophy than love, I shou'd advise him to seek his cure from that. But if he had more love than philosophy—Mercy upon him!

Mer. Then you have just such a lover arrived.

La. Match. Bless us! 'tis not Seneca's ghost, I hope.

Mer. No, 'tis the ghost of a departed beau, in the

habit of a country 'squire, with the sentiments of an Athenian philosopher, and the passion of an Arcadian swain.

La. Match. This must be Wisemore. [*Aside.*

Verm. A motley piece, indeed. I fancy, my dear, there is as ridiculous a variety in this one, as in all the rest of your admirers.

Rattle. Variety enough: for by his dress you wou'd imagine he came from North Friezland, and his manners seem piping hot from the Cape of Good Hope.

La. Match. Fie! you rally.

Mer. Why, positively, the poor man is an apter object of pity than of raillery, and wou'd better become an elegy than a lampoon. He look'd as melancholy, as ill-natur'd, and as absurd, as I've seen a young poet who could not outlive the third night.

Rattle. ——Or an old bridegroom who has outliv'd the third night.

Verm. Dear Matchless, let us turn; for I see one coming whom I wou'd avoid.

Mer. You won't be so cruel! I'll discover you.

Verm. Do: and I will revenge myself on you to Helena.

SCENE XII.

MALVIL, MERITAL.

Malv. Who are those fine ladies you parted from?

Mer. Some of Rattle's acquaintance.

Malv. Was not Vermilia there?

Mer. She was.

Malv. Do you act friendly, Merital?

Mer. Ay, faith! and very friendly; for I have been

pleading your cause with the same earnestness as if I had been your counsel in the affair. I have been a sort of proxy to you.

Malv. Confusion! [*Aside.*

Mer. Why, thou art jealous, I believe. Come, do we dine together?

Malv. I am engaged, but will meet at five.

Mer. Nay, then I am engaged, and to meet a mistress.

Malv. A mistress at five!

Mer. Ay, Sir, and such a mistress—But I see something has put you out of humour: so I will not expatiate on my happiness: for I know lovers are, of all creatures, the most subject to envy. So, your servant.

SCENE XIII.

MALVIL *alone.*

Malv. And thou shalt find they are subject to rage too. Do you laugh at your successful villany! Yet his open carriage wou'd persuade me he has no ill design. This morning too he told me of another mistress. But that may be false, and only intended to blind my suspicions. It must be so. Vermilia's fond expressions, her appointment, his denying her. O they are glaring proofs! and I am now convinced. Yet all these appearances may be delusions. Well, I will once more see her. If I find her innocent, I am happy; if not, the knowing her guilt may cure my love. But anxiety is the greatest of torments.

In doubt, as in the dark, things sad appear,
More dismal, and more horrid than they are.

ACT III. SCENE I.

SCENE, LADY MATCHLESS'S *House.*

MALVIL, VERMILIA.

MALVIL.

How have I deserved this usage, Madam? By what behaviour of mine have I provoked you to make me that despicable thing, the dangler after a woman who is carrying on an affair with another man?

Verm. An affair, Sir?

Malv. You know too well the justice of my accusation, nor am I a stranger to your soft, languishing fondness, your wanton praises of my rival, of Merital, your walking in the Park, your appointment with him.

Verm. O jealousy, thou child and bane of love! Rash, dreaming madman, cou'd you awake from your errors, and see how grossly you abuse me, if you had the least spark of humanity left, it wou'd raise a flame of horror in your soul.

Malv. O, it were worse than ten thousand deaths to find I have wrong'd you, and I wou'd undergo them all to prove you innocent.

Verm. To think you innocent, I must think you mad. Invention cannot counterfeit any other excuse.

Malv. A reflection on your own conduct, Madam, will justify every part of mine, but my love.

Verm. Name not that noble passion. A savage is as capable of it as thou art. And do you tax me with my love to Merital? He has as many virtues as thou hast blemishes. The proudest of our sex might glory in his addresses, the meanest might be ashamed of thine. Go, curse thy fate, and nature, which has made thee

an object of our scorn: but thank thy jealousy, which has discovered to thee that thou art the derision of a successful rival, and my aversion.

SCENE II.

MALVIL, CATCHIT, [Malvil *stands as in amaze*].

Catch. O gemini! Sir, what's the matter? I met my mistress in the greatest rage.

Malv. You know enough not to have asked that. Here, take this letter, and when Merital comes to his appointment, you will find an opportunity to deliver it him. Be sure to do it before he sees your mistress; for I have contrived a scheme in it that will ruin him for ever with her.——You will deliver it carefully?

Catch. Yes, indeed, Sir.

Malv. And learn what you can, and come to my lodgings to-morrow morning—take this kiss as an earnest of what I'll do for you.

SCENE III.

CATCHIT *alone.*

Catch. Methinks, I long to know what this scheme is. I must know, and I will know. 'Tis but wafer-sealed I'll open it and read it. But here are the ladies.

SCENE IV.

LADY MATCHLESS, VERMILIA.

La. Match. Ha, ha, ha! and so the creature has taken

a fit of jealousy into his head, and has been raving most tragically! Don't look so dull, dear; what, because he gives himself airs, will you give yourself the vapours?

Verm. I am concerned only that I should ever have favoured him in my opinion.

La. Match. Indeed, you have no cause: for you have revenge in your own hand, since nothing but matrimony will cure his phrenzy.

Verm. Which cure when I afford him, may I—

La. Match. O no oaths, no imprecations! But, if any, let it be this. When next you are inclined to forgive him, may he be so stubborn as not to ask it; that, I am sure, is curse enough.

Verm. Nay, but, dear Matchless, do not rally me on that subject.

La. Match. Is there any subject fitter for raillery? the wise, you know, have always made a jest of love.

Verm. Yes, and love has made a jest of the wise, who seem to have no other quarrel to it, but that they are the least successful in it.

La. Match. Nay, if you are an advocate for love, I shall think——

Verm. What?

La. Match. That you are in love.

Verm. Well, you are a censorious, ill-natur'd, teazing——

La. Match. Don't be out of humour, child. I tell you the fellow's your own.

SCENE V.

To them, RATTLE.

Rattle. Ladies, your humble servant.

La. Match. O, you are most opportunely come, for

poor Vermilia is horridly in the vapours, and you are, we know, a skilful physician.

Rattle. But what signifies the skill of a physician, when the patient will not take his advice.

Verm. When he mistakes the disease, his advice is not like to be safe. And, I assure you, I never was less in the vapours than now.

La. Match. That's a dangerous symptom: for when a sick lady thinks herself well, her fever must be very high.

Rattle. Pox take her! wou'd she was dead! for she's always in my way. [*Aside.*

Verm. This is acting physicians, indeed, to persuade me into a distemper.

Rattle. I believe, Madam, you are in very little danger. But, widow, the whole town wonders you are not surfeited with so much courtship.

Verm. Courtship, Mr. Rattle, is a dish adapted to the palate of our sex.

Rattle. But there is a second course more agreeable, and better adapted to a lady's palate. Courtship is but a long, dull grace to a rich entertainment, both equally banes to sharp-set-appetite, and equally out of fashion; the beau-monde say only *Benedicite*, and then fall on.

La. Match. No; courtship is to marriage, like a fine avenue to an old falling mansion beautified with a painted front; but no sooner is the door shut on us, than we discover an old, shabby, out-of-fashion'd hall, whose only ornaments are a set of branching stag's horns——lamentable emblems of matrimony.

SCENE VI.

LADY MATCHLESS, LORD FORMAL, VERMILIA, RATTLE.

L. Form. Ladies, I am your most obedient and obsequious humble servant. Mr. Rattle, I am your devoted.

Rattle. That's an over-strain'd compliment, my lord: we all know you are entirely devoted to the ladies.

La. Match. That's an over-strain'd compliment to us; for we must be all proud of so elegant a devoté!

L. Form. Your ladyship has infused more pride into the ingredients of my nature by that one word than ever was in them since their first mingling into man. And if my title, or the opinion which the world has (I will not say justly) conceived of me, can render me agreeable to the fountain of beauty, I wou'd, with pleasure, throw off all other canals, and let the pure current of my joys flow from her alone.

La. Match. That were to draw the envy of the whole world on me; and wou'd be as unreasonable as a desire to monopolize the light of the sun.

L. Form. As your ladyship says, I have been compared to the sun. But the comparison will break, if pursued; for the sun shines on all alike; whereas my influence wou'd be strictly confined to one centre.

Rattle. Methinks, my lord, you who profess good-breeding, should be less particular before ladies.

Verm. O, we may excuse particularity in a lover; besides, Lord Formal is so perfect a master of good-breeding, that if he launched a little out of the common road, the world wou'd esteem it a precedent, and not an error.

La. Match. O, we shall never out-shine the court of France, till Lord Formal is at the head of *Les Affaires de Beau Monde.*

L. Form. Your ladyship's compliments are such an inundation, that they hurry the weak return of mine down their stream. But, really, I have been at some pains to inculcate principles of good-breeding, and laid down some rules concerning distance, submission, ceremonies, laughing, sighing, ogling, visits, affronts, respect, pride, love.

Verm. Has your lordship published this book? It must be mightily read, for it promises much——And then the name of the author—

Rattle. [*Aside.*] Promises nothing.

L. Form. Why, I am not determined to print it at all: for there are an ill-bred set of people called critics, whom I have no great notion of encountering.

SCENE VII.

To them SIR POSITIVE TRAP, SIR APISH SIMPLE, HELENA.

Sir Pos. Ladies, your humble servant; your servant, gentlemen.

La. Match. You are a great stranger, Sir Positive.

Sir Pos. Ay, cousin, you must not take our not visiting you oftener amiss, for I am full of business, and she there, poor girl, is never easy but when she is at home. The Traps are no gadding family, our women stay at home and do business.

Rattle. [*Aside.*] Their husbands' business, I believe.

Sir Pos. They are none of our fidgeting, flirting, flaunting lasses, that sleep all the morning, dress all the afternoon, and card it all night. Our daughters rise before the sun, and go to bed with him: The Traps are house-wives, cousin. We teach our daughters to make a pie instead of a curtsie, and that good old English art of clear-starching, instead of that heathenish gambol called dancing.

L. Form. Sir, give me leave to presume to ask your pardon.

Sir Apish. Why, Sir father of mine, you will not speak against dancing before the ladies. Clear-starching, indeed! you will pardon him, Madam? Sir Positive is a little *à la Campagne.*

Sir Pos. Dancing begets warmth, which is the parent of wantonness. It is, Sir, the great grandfather of cuckoldom.

L. Form. O inhuman! it is the most glorious invention that has been conceived by the imagination of mankind, and the most perfect mark that distinguishes us from the brutes.

Sir Pos. Ay, Sir, it may serve some, perhaps; but the Traps have always had reason to distinguish them.

L. Form. You seem to have misunderstood me, Sir; I mean the polite world from the savage.

La. Match. Have you seen the new opera, cousin Helena?

Hel. I never saw an opera, cousin; and, indeed, I have a great curiosity——

L. Form. May I presume on the honour of waiting on you.

Sir Pos. Sir, Sir, my niece has an antipathy to music, it always makes her head ache.

Sir Apish. Ha, ha, ha! music make a lady's head ache!

Sir Pos. Ay, and her husband's heart ache too, by the right hand of the Traps.

L. Form. Pray, Sir, who are the Traps?

Sir Pos. Why, Sir, the Traps are a venerable family. We have had, at least, fifty knights of the shire, deputy lieutenants, and colonels of the militia in it. Perhaps the Grand Mogul has not a nobler coat of arms. It is, Sir, a lion rampant, with a wolf couchant, and a cat courant, in a field gules.

L. Form. It wants nothing but supporters to be very noble, truly.

Sir Pos. Supporters, Sir! it has six thousand a year to support its nobility, and six thousand years to support its antiquity.

L. Form. You will give me leave to presume, Sir, with all the deference imaginable to your superiority of judgment, to doubt whether it be practicable to confer the title of noble on any coat of arms that labours under the deplorable deficiency of a coronet.

Sir Pos. How, Sir! do you detract from the nobility of my coat of arms? If you do, Sir, I must tell you, you labour under a deficiency of common sense.

La. Match. O fie, Sir Positive! you are too severe on his lordship.

Sir Pos. He is a lord then! and what of that? An old English baronet is above a lord. A title of yesterday! an innovation! whow ere lords, I wonder, in the time of Sir Julius Cæsar? And it is plain he was a baronet, by his being called by his Christian name.

Verm. Christen'd name! I apprehend, Sir, that Cæsar lived before the time of Christianity.

Sir Pos. And what then, Madam? he might be a baronet without being a Christian, I hope. But I don't suppose our antiquity will recommend us to you: for women love upstarts, by the right hand of the Traps.

SCENE VIII.

To them WISEMORE.

Wisem. Ha! grant me patience, Heaven. Madam, if five months' absence has not effaced the remembrance of what has passed between us, you will recollect me with blushing cheeks. Not to blush now were to forsake your sex.

La. Match. You have forsaken your humanity, Sir, to affront me thus publicly.

Wisem. How was I deceived by my opinion of your

good sense! but London wou'd seduce a saint. A widow no sooner comes to this vile town, than she keeps open house for all guests. All, all are welcome. Your hatchments were at first intended to repel visitants; but they are now hung out for the same hospitable ends as the bills, 'Lodgings to let;' with this difference only, that the one invites to a mercenary, the other to a free tenement.

Rattle. This behaviour, Sir, will not be suffered here.

Sir Apish. No, Sir, this behaviour, Sir, will not be suffered here, Sir.

L. Form. Upon my title, it is not altogether consonant to the rules of consummate good-breeding.

La. Match. Pray, gentlemen, take no notice.

Wisem. Madam, I may have been too rude; I hope you'll pardon me. The sudden surprise of such a sight hurried away my senses, as if I sympathized with the objects I beheld. But I have recovered them. My reason cools, and I can now paint out your errors. Start not at that word, nor be offended that I do it before so many of your admirers: for tho' my colours be never so lively, the weak eye of their understanding is too dim to distinguish them. They will take them for beauties: they will adore you for them. You may have a coronet, doubtless. A large jointure is as good a title to a lord, as a coronet is to a fine lady.

La. Match. Ha, ha, ha! witty, I protest, and true; for, in my opinion, a lord is the prettiest thing in the world.

L. Form. And your ladyship may make him the happiest thing in the world.

Wisem. O nature, nature, why didst thou form woman, in beauty the master-piece of creation, and give her a soul capable of being caught with the tinsel outside of such a fop as this! this empty, gaudy, nameless thing.

L. Form. Let me presume to tell you, that nameless thing will be agreeable to the ladies, in spite of your envy.

Wisem. Madam, by all that's heavenly, I love you more than life; wou'd I might not say, than wisdom. If it be not in my power to merit a return, let me obtain this grant, that you wou'd banish from you these knaves, these vultures; wolves are more merciful than they. What is their desire, but to riot in your plenty? to sacrifice your boundless stores to their licentious appetites? to pay their desponding creditors with your gold? to ravage you, ruin you; nay to make you curse that auspicious day which gave you birth!

L. Form. This is the rudest gentleman that ever offended my ears since they first enjoyed the faculty of hearing. [*Aside.*

Verm. This is very unaccountable, methinks.

La. Match. Lord, my dear, don't you know he has been formerly a beau? and was, indeed, very well received in his time; 'til going down into the country, and shutting himself up in a study among a set of paper-philosophers, he, who went in a butterfly, came out a book-worm. Ha, ha, ha!

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Wisem. When once a lady's raillery is set a running, it very seldom stops till it has exhausted all her wit.

Rattle. Agad, I would advise you to wade off before the stream's too high; for your philosophy will be sure to sink you.

Sir Pos. Ay, ay, sink sure enough: for, by the right hand of the Traps, a lady's wit is seldom any thing but froth.

Rattle. I have seen it make many a wise esquire froth at the mouth before now.

Verm. That must be a very likely sign of a lover indeed.

Wisem. O very, very likely; for it is a certain sign of a madman.

L. Form. If those are synonymous terms, I have long since entered into a state of distraction.

Wisem. If I stay, I shall be mad, indeed. Madam, farewell; may Heaven open your eyes before you are shut into perdition!

SCENE IX.

LADY MATCHLESS, VERMILIA, HELENA, LORD FORMAL, SIR POSITIVE, SIR APISH, AND RATTLE.

La. Match. Ha, ha, ha! rustick! Did you ever, ever see such a creature?

L. Form. No, upon my title; nor am I perfectly determinate what species of animal to assign him to, unless he be one of those barbarous insects the polite call country 'squires.

Sir Pos. Barbarous! Sir, I'd have you know there are not better-natured people alive.

Hel. [*Aside.*] I am uneasy at this disappointment of Merital.—Sir, my aunt will be at home before us.

Sir Pos. So she will, chucky. Lookee, cousin, you see the Traps don't love gadding.

L. Form. May I presume to lead you to your coach?

Sir Pos. Sir, I always lead my niece myself: it's the custom of the Traps.

L. Form. Sir, your most obedient and obsequious humble servant.

SCENE X.

LADY MATCHLESS, VERMILIA, LORD FORMAL, SIR APISH, AND RATTLE.

L. Form. If they are all like you, the Traps are the worst bred family in Europe. [*Aside.*] I presume that gentleman has some heiress with him.

Sir Apish. Why, she is to be my wife to-morrow morning.

La. Match. How, Sir Apish! this is surprising.

Sir Apish. Why, indeed, I do not like country education; but then I consider that the town air will produce town-breeding: for there was Lady Rig, who, when she first came to town, nothing was ever so awkward. But now she swims a minuet, and sits you eight and forty hours at quadrille.

L. Form. Her ladyship is indebted to my instructions; for 'tis well known, before I had the honour of her acquaintance, she has publicly spoke against that divine collection of polite learning written by Mr. Gulliver: but now, the very moment it is named, she breaks out into the prettiest exclamation, and cries, O the dear, sweet, pretty, little creatures! Oh, gemini! wou'd I had been born a Lilliputian.

La. Match. But methinks, Sir Apish, a lady who has seen the world should be more agreeable to one of your refined taste: besides I have heard you say you like a widow.

Sir Apish. Ah! l'amour! a perfect declaration! she is in love with me, mardie! [*Aside.*] Ah! Madam, if I durst declare it, there is a certain person in the world, who, in a certain person's eye, is a more agreeable

person than any person, amongst all the persons, whom persons think agreeable persons.

La. Match. Whoever that person is, she, certainly, is a very happy person.

Sir Apish. Ah! Madam, my eyes sufficiently and evidently declare, that that person is no other person than your ladyship's own person.

La. Match. Nay, all this I have drawn on myself.

L. Form. Your ladyship's eyes are two loadstones that attract the admiration of our whole sex: their virtues are more refined than the loadstone's; for you, Madam, attract the golden part.

Rattle. Come, gentlemen, are you for the opera?

L. Form. Oh! by all means. Ladies, your most humble servant.

Sir Apish. Your ladyship's everlasting creature.

SCENE XI.

LADY MATCHLESS, VERMILIA.

Verm. And pray, my dear, what do you mean by an additional lover?

La. Match. To deliver my cousin Helena from so detestable a match. She entreated it of me; and I believe I have now done her business, and am a successful rival.

SCENE XII.

To them CATCHIT.

Catch. Oh, Madam, I have been waiting this half hour for an opportunity! There's a terrible scene of mischief

going forwards. Mr. Malvil has been taxing me about Mr. Merital; and so I let drop a few words, and so he has taken a fit of jealousy, and so see the consequences.

[*Gives an open letter.*

Verm. Ha! 'tis a challenge! How came you by it?

Catch. Why, Madam, he had heard that Mr. Merital had an appointment here, and so he desired me to give him this letter, and so, and so——

Verm. And so you had the curiosity to open it.

La. Match. Since it has given us an opportunity to prevent mischief, you must pardon her.

Verm. Prevent! No, I'll further it rather.

La. Match. But, my dear, consider here is the life of the innocent as well as the guilty at stake.

Catch. O, dear Madam, don't let poor Mr. Merital suffer for my fault!

Verm. Your fault!

Catch. If you will pardon me, Madam, I'll discover the whole mistake.

La. Match. On that condition, I'll assure your pardon.

Catch. Why, Madam, I had heard that Mrs. Helena was to be here at five, and so I sent word to Mr. Merital; and Mr. Malvil coming in at that time (which was when your ladyship went to the Park this morning), I dropt a word or two about meeting a mistress here; and so, I suppose, he thought it was your ladyship; and so, this afternoon he gave me a letter, which, I must own, my curiosity——

Verm. Very fine, indeed!

La. Match. I have a thought just risen, which may turn this accident into a very lucky scene of diversion. Mistress Catchit, can you not change the name of Merital on the superscription into that of Wisemore?

Catch. O, Madam, I am dexterous at those things!

La. Match. Come in, then, and I'll tell you farther.

Give me your hand, Vermilia: take my word for it, child, the men are very silly creatures; therefore let us laugh at mankind,

> And teach them, that, in spite of all their scorn,
> Our slaves they are, and for our service born.

SCENE XIII.

SCENE, SIR POSITIVE TRAP'S *House.*

LADY TRAP *discovered, and then* MERITAL.

La. Trap. Every thing is prepared; now is the happy hour. I hear some steps; 'tis surely he. Who's there? my love?

Mer. My life! my soul! my joy!

La. Trap. Soft, my aunt will hear us.

Mer. Oh, name her not. She is a perfect antidote to love. Let these blessed moments be spent in nothing but soft caresses. Oh! let me breathe out my fond soul on thy lips, and let thine own inform thee what I'd say. It will, I know, be tender as my thoughts.

La. Trap. [*Aside.*] What fools men are to make bustles about particular women, when they know not one from another in the dark?

Mer. But say, my life, what method shall I contrive for your escape? Consider you are in the jaws of wretches, who would, for a little profit, see you miserable for ever.

La. Trap. I must blame my ill-advised boldness, in trusting myself alone, even with you. I fear the frailty of my own sex, and the strength of yours.

Mer. Not infant babes can love their tender mothers

with more innocence. Sure my Helena has observed nothing in my conduct to ground such a suspicion on. But let us not trifle: go with me now; do not trust your aunt; she has cunning enough to deceive a thousand Argus's.

La. Trap. Nay, you have no reason to asperse my aunt; she always speaks well of you, and I hate ingratitude.

[*Here* Helena *entering with a candle, overhearing* Lady Trap, *blows it out, retires to the corner of the scene, and listens.*

Mer. 'Tis the aunt herself. What a nose have I, to mistake a bunch of hemlock for a nosegay of violets! I don't know the meaning of this; but I'll try how far she will carry it; perhaps I may blind her suspicions for the future. [*Aside.*] Come, come, Madam, contrive some way for an escape, or I shall make use of the present opportunity. My passion must be cooled.

La. Trap. [*In a low voice.*] I'll call my aunt, if you dare attempt.

Mer. She is here already, Madam. Ha, ha, ha! did you think I did not know a fine woman from a green girl? Cou'd not my warm, vigorous kisses inform you that I knew on whom they were bestowed? You must long since have discover'd my passion for your niece to have been a counterfeit, a covering on my flame for you. Be assured, Madam, she has nothing agreeable to me but her fortune. Wou'd you manage wisely, you might secure yourself a gallant, and your gallant an estate.

La. Trap. Could I believe you, Sir, it were an affront to my virtue.

Mer. Ah! Madam, whom did you expect just now, when, with a languishing sigh, you cried, Who's there? my love? that's not a name for a husband.

La. Trap. Since I am discovered, I will own—

Mer. Let me kiss away the dear word.—Brandy and assafœtida, by Jupiter. [*Aside.*

La. Trap. But will you be a man of honour?

Mer. [*Aloud.*] For ever, Madam, for ever, whilst those bright eyes conquer all they behold. The devil's in it if this does not alarm somebody. [*Aside.*

La. Trap. Softly, Sir, you will raise the house.

Mer. [*Aside.*] I am sure I never wanted relief more—

La. Trap. Ha! I am alone, in the dark, a bedchamber by, if you shou'd attempt my honour, who knows what the frailty of my sex may consent to? Or, if you shou'd force me, am I, poor weak woman, able to resist? Ay, but then there is law and justice; yet you may depend too fatally on my good nature.

Mer. Consider, Madam, you are in my power; remember your declaration. I had your love from your own dear lips. Consider well the temptation of so much beauty, the heights of my offered joys, the time, the place, and the violence of my passion. Think on this, Madam, and you can expect no other than that I should this moment seize on all my transports.

La. Trap. If you shou'd—Heav'n forgive you.

Mer. [*louder still.*] Yet, to convince you of my generosity, you are at your liberty. I will do nothing without your consent.

La. Trap. Then to shew you what a confidence I repose in your virtue, I vow to grant whate'er you ask.

Mer. [*very loud*] And to show you how well I deserve that confidence, I vow never to tempt your virtuous ears with love again; but try, by your example, to reduce licentious passion to pure Platonic love.

SCENE XIV.

HELENA *behind, with* SIR POSITIVE *with a broadsword.*

Sir Pos. I hear 'em, I hear 'em.

La. Trap. Ha! Sir Positive's voice! Avaunt, nor think all thy intreaties shall avail against my virtue, or that it is in the power of all mankind to make me wrong the best, the kindest of husbands. I swear I never will even in thought, more than at this moment.

Sir Pos. O! incomparable virtue! what an excellent lady have I! Lights there, lights.

[*Servants bring lights.*

La. Trap. O! my dear, you are most seasonably come; for I was hardly able to resist him.

Sir Pos. What's your business here, Sir?

Mer. My usual business, Sir, cuckoldom. My design is against your worship's head and your lady's heart.

Sir Pos. A very pretty gentleman! And so, Sir, you are beginning with my wife first?

Mer. Yes, Sir, the easiest way to the husband is through the wife.

Sir Pos. Come away, lady wife; come away, niece. Sir, there's the door: the next time I catch you here, I may, perhaps, teach you what it is to make a cuckold of Sir Positive Trap.

Hel. Assure yourself I'll speak to you no more.

La. Trap. Au! the monster!

Mer. Your monster is gone before, Madam.—So, whilst I am trying to blind the aunt with a pretended passion for her, the niece overhears, and she'll speak to me no more!—There never comes any good making love to an old woman.

SCENE XV.

SCENE, WISEMORE'S *lodgings.*

WISEMORE *alone.*

How vain is human reason, when philosophy cannot overcome our passion! when we can see our errors, and yet pursue them. But if to love be an error, why should great minds be the most subject to it? No, the first pair enjoyed it in their state of innocence, whilst error was unborn.

SCENE XVI.

To him, SERVANT *with a Letter.*

Serv. A letter, Sir.

WISEMORE *reads.*

'SIR,

'You, who are conscious of being secretly my rival in the midst 'of an intimate friendship, will not be surprised when I desire that 'word may be cancelled between us, and that you wou'd not fail me 'to-morrow at seven in Hyde-park.

'Your injured MALVIL.'

What can this mean? Ha! here's a postscript.

'P.S. Your poor colourings of love for another woman, which you 'put on this morning, has confirm'd, not baffled, my suspicion. I 'am certain you had no mistress to meet at Lady Matchless's but 'Vermilia.'

Who brought this letter?

Serv. A porter, Sir, who said it required no answer.

Wisem. What am I to think? am I in a dream? or was this writ in one? Sure madness has possessed the world, and men, like the limbs of a tainted body, universally share the infection. What shall I do! to go is to encounter a madman, and yet I will. Some strange circumstance may have wrought this delusion, which my presence may dissipate. And, since love and jealousy are his diseases, I ought to pity him, who know by dreadful experience,

> When love in an impetuous torrent flows,
> How vainly reason wou'd its force oppose;
> Hurl'd down the stream, like flowers before the wind,
> She leaves to love the empire of the mind.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

SCENE, *Hyde Park.*

LADY MATCHLESS, VERMILIA, *masqued.*

LADY MATCHLESS.

I AM sure I saw some one hereabouts, who, by his posture, actions, and dress, must be my swain. Well, Vermilia, this sure is the maddest prank—what will the world say?

Verm. The world is a censorious, ill-natur'd critic, and I despise its cavillings. Besides, I am now grown careless of every thing. O! my dear! it is the most valuable privilege of friendship to disburthen our secrets into one another's bosoms—If you knew those of mine—I am sure you wou'd pity me.

SCENE II.

To them WISEMORE.

La. Match. I do pity you, indeed, for sure to be in love——

Wisem. Is to be foolish, mad, miserable—To be in love is to be in hell. [*Advancing from behind.*

La. Match. Do you speak from experience, Sir?

Wisem. From sad experience—I have been in love—so monstrously in love that, like a bow over bent, I am now relaxed into an opposite extreme—and heartily hate your whole sex.

La. Match. Poor Cardenio! Ha! ha! ha! be not so disconsolate; you may yet find your Lucinda.

Wisem. No, she has lost herself—and in a wilderness.

La. Match. How in a wilderness?

Wisem. Ay, in that town, that worst of wildernesses! where follies spread like thorns; where men act the part of tygers, and women of crocodiles; where vice lords it like a lion, and virtue, that phœnix, is so rarely seen, that she is believed a fable—But these sentiments do not please you, so, pray leave me.

Verm. Our company, Sir, was your own choice.

La. Match. And now you have raised our curiosity you shall lay it.

Wisem. I would have raised the devil sooner, and sooner wou'd I have laid him—Your curiosity, Madam, is a sort of a hydra, which not even Hercules can tame; so, dear ladies, leave me, or I shall pull off your sham-faces——

La. Match. You would repent it heartily if you did.

Wisem. Perhaps so.—I believe, indeed, you shew the best part of you.

La. Match. You wou'd give half your soul to see the best part of me.

Wisem. Half-a-crown I will. The best sight to me is your back, turn it, and away; you lose your time, indeed you do. What can such as you with a plain honest man like me? Go, seek your game: the beaus will begin to yawn presently, and sots return home from their debauches; strike in there, and you make your fortune, at least, get a dinner, which you may want by staying here.

La. Match. Do not be angry, dear rustic, for we are both enamoratas as well as you—nay, perhaps I am so with yourself. Hang constancy, you know too much of the world to be constant, sure.

Wisem. 'Tis from a knowledge of the world, Madam, that I am constant—For I know it has nothing which can pay me for the exchange.

La. Match. Come, come, you wou'd have more modern notions if you knew that a certain woman of fortune has some kind thoughts of you; and, I assure you, I am not what I seem.

Wisem. Faith, Madam, I shou'd not. Grandeur is to me nauseous as a gilded pill, and fortune, as it can never raise my esteem for the possessor, can never raise my love. My heart is no place of mercenary entertainment, nor owns more than one mistress. Its spacious rooms are all, all hers who slights and despises it. Yes, she has abandon'd me, and I will abandon myself to despair; so, pray, leave me to it, for such as you can have no business with the unhappy.

La. Match. Generous, worthy man! [*Aside.*] Romantic nonsense! I tell you I am a woman of family and fortune, perhaps beauty too, and so violently enamoured of your humour, that I am afraid my life is in your power.

Wisem. Wou'd your tongue was in my power, tho' I

question, even then, the possibility of stopping it. I wonder the anatomy of a woman's tongue does not enable our modern philosophers to discover a perpetual motion. To me, the Turkish yawl at an onset, the Irish howl at a funeral, or the Indian exclamation at an eclipse, are all soft music to that single noise.—It has no likeness in nature but a rattle-snake; the noise as odious, and the venom as dangerous.

La. Match. But, like a rattle-snake, it gives you warning, and if you will front the danger you must blame your own prowess if you smart for it.

Wisem. The serpent practises not half your wiles. He covers not his poison with the cloak of love. Like lawyers, you gild your deceit, and lead us to misery, whilst we imagine ourselves pursuing happiness.

La. Match. Ha! ha! ha! piqued malice! You have lost an estate for want of money, and a mistress for want of wit.

Wisem. Methinks, either of those possessions shou'd be maintained by juster titles.—In my opinion, the only title to the first shou'd be right, and, to the latter, merit, love, and constancy.

La. Match. Ha! ha! ha! then know, thou romantic hero, that right is a sort of knight-errant, whom we have long since laughed out of the world. Merit is demerit, constancy dulness, and love an out-of-fashion Saxon word, which no polite person understands. Lookee, Sir, pull out your purse to a lawyer, and your snuff-box to a lady, and I warrant you carry your point with both.

Wisem. The purse may, indeed, win the lawyer, but for the other, you must depend on chance. You may as well teach us a certain method to gain that fickle, airy, imaginary mistress, Fortune, whose emblems you are. For your favours are as blindly bestowed, as fickle in

their duration—and, like Fortune, you often curse him most to whom you seem most kind.

SCENE III.

To them MALVIL.

Malv. Wisemore, and women? My philosopher turned rake? Good-morrow, Ned; I see a country gentleman must have his morning walk.

Wisem. What does he mean? this coldness ill suits his letter. [*Aside.*] Ay, Sir, and you are very seasonably come to my assistance, or I had been devoured by two she-wolves, more ravenous than any in the deserts of America.

Malv. Nay, ladies, it was barbarous to attack with odds, and when even singly you might have vanquished. [*Talks apart with* Vermilia.

Wisem. Will you take away your companion, and leave us, for that gentleman and I have business?

La. Match. Not till you agree to an assignation. Promise to meet me barefaced at ten, and I am your servant.

Wisem. I'll promise any thing to be rid of you.

La. Match. Step aside, then, and I'll give you the signals.

Malvil *and* Vermilia *advance.*

Verm. Indeed, so gallant!

Malv. O, Madam, a lady is never more agreeable to me than at first sight, for, to my temper, a woman palls as much by frequent conversation as enjoyment.

Verm. But how are you sure that first sight will be agreeable?

Malv. Why, faith, as no woman has charms enough to engage my constancy to the last, so neither does any

want enough to fire my desires at first. But, if thy face be potently ugly, keep it to thyself, and discover only thy beauties. You are young, I am sure, and well-shaped, have a vast share of wit, and a very little share of modesty.

Verm. Impudence! In what, pray, have I discovered my want of it?

Malv. In your pretension to it, child; and, faith, that's better than the real possession. What is modesty, but a flaming sword to keep mankind out of Paradise? It is a Jack-with-a-lanthorn, that misleads poor women in their roads to happiness. It is the contempt of all society. Lawyers call it the sign of a bad cause, soldiers of cowardice, courtiers of ill-breeding, and women—the worst sign of a fool. Indeed, it has sometimes made a good cloak for the beauteous, tawdry outside of a lady's reputation, but, like other cloaks, it is now out of fashion, and worn no where but in the country.

Verm. Then, to silence your impertinence at once, know, Sir, that I'm a woman of fashion, rigidly virtuous, and severely modest.

Malv. A blank verse, faith, and may make a figure in a fustian tragedy. Four fine sounding words, and mean just nothing at all.

Verm. I suppose these are sentiments of you fine modern gentlemen. The beaus of this age, like the critics, will not see perfections in others which they are strangers to themselves. You confine the masterly hand of nature to the narrow bands of your own conceptions.

Malv. Why, what have we here? Seneca's morals under a masque.

Verm. I hope that title will prevent your farther perusal.

Malv. I'll tell you a way to do it.

Verm. O name it.

Malv. Unmasque then. If I like your face no better than your principles, Madam, I will immediately take my leave of both.

Verm. That's an uncertainty, I'm afraid, considering the sentiments you just now professed.—Was you, indeed, the hero in love which your friend was there?

Malv. No, faith, I have been hero in love long enough.

Verm. What woman was blessed with so faithful an admirer? Pray what was your mistress's name?

Malv. Her name was nothing. I was violently enamoured with a constellation of virtues in a fine lady, who had not one in her whole composition.

Verm. And pray, Sir, how was you cured of your love.

Malv. As children are of their fear when they discover the bugbear.

La. Match. [*Advancing with* Wisemore.] Well, you will be punctual?

Verm. O, my dear, I have met with a discarded lover too, full as romantic as yours.

La. Match. Say you so? then, I believe, these are the two famed heroes in Don Quixotte.

Wisem. Shall we never lose your prating?

La. Match. Promise not to dodge us.

Wisem. Not even to look after you.

La. Match. Adieu then.

Verm. Bie, constancy; ha, ha, ha!

SCENE IV.

WISEMORE, MALVIL.

Wisem. Well, Sir, you see I am come.

Malv. And am very sorry to see it too, Ned, ha, ha, ha!

Wisem. This reception, Sir, ill agrees with your letter; but 'twere absurd to expect coherencies in a madman's behaviour.

Malv. What's this.

Wisem. Was it, Sir, from my expressed abhorrence of this civil butchery you pitched on me as one who wou'd give you the reputation of a duellist without the danger? perhaps, you had rather met with another.

Malv. That I had, indeed.

Wisem. Death and the devil! did you invite me here to laugh at me?

Malv. Are you mad, or in a dream?

Wisem. He who denies to day what he writ yesterday, either dreams, or worse. Your monstrous jealousy, your challenge, and your present behaviour, look like a feverish dream.

Malv. Invite! jealousy! challenge! what do you mean?

Wisem. [*Shews a letter.*] Read there, then ask my meaning?

Malv. [*Reads.*] Ha! my letter to Merital! villainous jade! she has alter'd the name too on the superscription. I am abused, indeed.

Wisem. Well, Sir!

Malv. Wisemore, be assured my surprise is equal to yours. This letter, I did, indeed, write, but not to you.

Wisem. How!

Malv. Believe me, on my honour, I did not send it you. His name to whom I designed it is erased, and yours superscribed, I suppose, by the person to whom I entrusted the delivery. And, be assured, you was not the enemy I wished to meet here.

Wisem. What novel's this?

Malv. Faith! it may be a pleasant one to you, and no less useful to me. But the morning is late; you shall go

home, and breakfast at my lodgings, and, in the way, I will let you into the whole story.

Wisem. Whatever it be which clears my friend from the imputation of so wild a delusion must be agreeable to me.

Malv. And now we will have our swing at satire against the sex.

Wisem. I shall be as severe as a damned poet is on the age.

Malv. And, perhaps, for the same reason——at least the world will always give satire on women the names of malice and revenge——whoever aims at it will succeed,

Like a detracting courtier in disgrace,
The wise will say, He only wants a place.

SCENE V.

SCENE, SIR POSITIVE TRAP'S *House.*

HELENA *alone.*

Hel. Of three deplorable evils, which shall I chuse! to endure the tyranny of an imperious aunt? to venture on a man whose inconstancy I have been an ocular witness of? or support the company of a fool for life? certainly the last is the least terrible. I do now think our parents are wiser than we are, and have reason to curb our inclinations: since it is a happier lot to marry a fool with a good estate than a knave without one.

SCENE VI.

SIR POSITIVE, HELENA.

Sir Pos. Are you ready? Are you prepared? Hey?

Hel. I am sensible, Sir, how unworthily I had fixed my heart; and I think, neither wisdom nor honour oblige me to be undutiful to you longer.

Sir Pos. You are a wise girl! a very wise girl! and have considered doubtless the vast difference between a Baronet and a Mister. Ha, ha, and here he comes.

SCENE VII.

To them, SIR APISH.

Sir Pos. Sir Apish Simple, your humble servant. You are early. What, you have not slept a wink. I did not sleep for a week before I was married to my lady.

Sir Apish. You had a very strong constitution then, Sir Positive.

Sir Pos. Ay, Sir, we are a strong family, an Herculean race! Hercules was a Trap by his mother's side. Well, well, my niece there has given her consent, and every thing is ready. So take her by the hand——and——

Sir Apish. Upon my word, Sir Positive, I cannot dance a step.

Sir Pos. How! when I was as young as you I cou'd have danced over the moon, and into the moon too, without a fiddle. But come, I hate trifling. The lawyer is without with the deeds, and the parson is drest in his pontificalibus.

Sir Apish. The parson! I suppose he is a Welch one, and plays on the violin, ha, ha, ha!

Hel. I see my cousin has been as good as her word.

[*Aside.*

Sir Pos. Sir Apish, jesting with matrimony is playing with edged tools.

Sir Apish. Matrimony! ha, ha, ha! Sir Positive is merry this morning.

Sir Pos. Sir, you will put me out of humour presently.

Sir Apish. Sir, I have more reason to be out of humour; for you have invited me to breakfast without preparing any.

Sir Pos. Is not my niece prepared, Sir?

Sir Apish. Sir, I am no cannibal.

Sir Pos. Did you not come to marry my niece, Sir?

Sir Apish. Sir, I never had such a thought since I was begotten.

Sir Pos. The man is mad. [*Staring.*

Sir Apish. Poor Sir Positive! is it his first fit, Madam?

Sir Pos. A dark room and clean straw would be of service.

Sir Apish. Nay, nay, I have no time to reason with a madman; but I hope when you hear I am married to one of the finest ladies about town it will cure your frenzy; and so, Sir, your humble servant.

Hel. Bless me, Sir! what's the meaning of this?

Sir Pos. Why the meaning is that he is mad, and this news will make my lady mad, and that will make me mad; and you may be mad for a husband, by what I can see, by the right hand of the Traps.

Hel. So. I had yesterday two lovers; but now I have forsaken the one, and the other has forsaken me. Well, these men are jewels; so far, I am sure they are jewels, that the richest lady has always the most in her equipage.

SCENE VIII. *The Piazza.*

MALVIL, WISEMORE.

Malv. How! an assignation from Vermilia?

Wisem. That's the name, the place this, the hour ten.

Malv. Impudent harlot!

Wisem. She made me pass my word to keep it secret from you; but, when I perceived it the same name with that in your letter, I thought myself obliged by friendship to discover it. The other signals were a red cloak and a masque.

Malv. Thou dearest, best of friends. Ten, you say? it is now within an hour of that time. Since you do not intend to keep your assignation, I will take it off your hands. But you may heap another obligation on me by your presence; for I am resolved to expose her.

Wisem. I am to meet a serjeant-at-law hard by—but will return with all possible expedition, and then—if I can be of service.

Malv. If you return before the hour you will find me at Tom's, if not here.

Wisem. Till then, farewell—How am I involving myself in other men's affairs, when my own require my utmost diligence! what course shall I take? I cannot resolve to leave her, and, I am sure, she has given me no hopes of gaining her. Yet she has not shewn any real dislike, nor will I ever imagine her inclinations leaning to any of those fops she is surrounded with.

SCENE IX.

MERITAL, WISEMORE.

Mer. So thoughtful, Wisemore? What point of philosophy are you discussing?

Wisem. One that has puzzled all who ever attempted it——Woman, Sir, was the subject of my contemplation.

Mer. Ha! hey! what point of the compass does the widow turn to now?

Wisem. A very frozen one.—Foppery.

Mer. Let me advise thee, Ned, to give over your attack, or change your method. For, be assur'd, widows are a study you will never be any proficient in, till you are initiated into that modern science which the French call *Le Bon Assurance.*

Wisem. Ay, ay, we may allow you gentlemen of professed gaiety those known turns of raillery, since they were the estate of your forefathers: there is an hereditary fund of little pleasantries which the beaus of every age enjoy in a continual succession.

Mer. Well, and I hope you will do those of this age the justice to confess they do not attempt any innovation in the province of wit.

Wisem. Art thou so converted then as to despise the fops?

Mer. As much as thou dost the women, I believe, Ned.

Wisem. You mistake me. It is their follies only I despise. But there, certainly, are women, whose beauty to their minds, like dress to their beauty, is rather a covering than an ornament.

Mer. These are high flights, indeed. But, tell me, on what do you build your hopes of the widow?

Wisem. On an opinion I have of her good sense and good nature. The first will prevent her favouring a fop, the latter may favour me.

Mer. And, pray, what foundation is your opinion of her good sense built on? If, as you just now seemed to think, the beaus are its supporters—it is a very rotten one.

Wisem. No; when I said she inclined to foppery, I meant only for her diversion.

Mer. Hum! I believe women very seldom take matrimony for a penance.

Wisem. You draw too direct inferences from her con-

duct towards coxcombs. Depend on it, they are mirrors, in which you can hardly discover the mind of a woman of sense, because she seldom shows it them unmasqued. If she be not a woman of sense, I have, indeed, built a castle in the air, which every breeze of perfumes can overturn.

Mer. Why, really, it seems to me very little else, by what I know of her ladyship. But you are one of those reasonable lovers who can live a day on a kind look, a week on a smile, and a soft word wou'd victual you for an East India voyage.

Wisem. I find the conversation of a friend effaces the remembrance of business.

Mer. Any thing to the island of love?

Wisem. No, no, to that of law.

Mer. Success attend you——why, I have been forgetful too, but fortune, I see, is so kind as to remind me.

SCENE X.

SIR APISH, MERITAL.

Mer. Sir Apish, your humble servant.

Sir Apish. Dear Tom, I kiss your button.

Mer. That's a pretty suit of yours, Sir Apish, perfectly gay, new, and *Alamode.*

Sir Apish. He, he, he! the ladies tell me I refine upon them. I think I have studied dress long enough to know a little, and I have the good fortune to have every suit liked better than the former.

Mer. Why, indeed, I have remarked that, as your dull pretenders to wisdom grow wiser with their years, so your men of gaiety, the older they grow, the finer they grow. But come, your looks confess there is more in this. The town says it too.

Sir Apish. What, dear Tom?

Mer. That you are to be married, and to a Yorkshire great fortune.

Sir Apish. He, he, he! I'll make you my confidant in that affair. 'Tis true, I had such a treaty on foot, for the girl has ten thousand pounds, which wou'd have patched up some breaches in my estate; but a finer lady has vouchsafed to throw a hundred into my lap, and so I have e'en dropt the other.

Mer. What, are you in actual possession?

Sir Apish. Of her heart, Sir, and shall be, perhaps, of every thing else in a day or two. Ah! she's a fine creature, Tom; she is the greatest beauty, and the greatest wit——Pshaw, can't you guess whom I mean?

Mer. No——for I know no orange-wench of such a fortune. [*Aside.*

Sir Apish. Why, who can be all this but Lady Matchless?

Mer. Upon my word, I commend your exchange. Sir Apish, it lies in your power to do me an exquisite favour —and, I know, you will do any thing to serve your friend.

Sir Apish. I wou'd as much as another, indeed—why, what a pox, does he intend to borrow money of me? [*Aside.*

Yes, yes, as I was saying, Tom, I wou'd do any thing to serve a friend in necessity; but badness of tenants, two or three supernumerary suits of laced clothes, and a bad run of dice, have reduced me, really to such an extremity of cash—

Mer. You misapprehend me. You were this morning, I hear, to be married to Helena?

Sir Apish. And, ha, ha, ha! I must tell it you: I have been just now with Sir Positive Trap, her uncle; and, when he expected the performance of articles, I per-

suaded him he was mad, laughed at him, and, with a brave front faced him down that I knew nothing of the matter.

Mer. You shall go back then immediately, turn your former visit into raillery,—tho' it be a little absurd, it will pass on the knight—dissemble a willingness to go through affairs; I will be your chaplain, and may, perhaps, go through affairs in your place.

Sir Apish. Is she an acquaintance of yours, then?

Mer. O, ay.

Sir Apish. Dear Tom, I am very glad I can oblige you by a resignation, and will do to the utmost of my power; and to shew you, Sir, that I love to serve a friend, Sir, I'll but step to the next street, and be here, Sir, at your commands, Sir, in a moment, Sir.

Mer. [*solus.*] My rencounter with the old lady, last night, surprized me: there must have been some mystery in that affair, which my disguise may help me to unravel. Men of capricious tempers wou'd raise a hundred jealousies on this occasion; but it shall be ever my sentiments of a mistress, in all doubtful cases—

> That if she's true, time will her truth discover;
> But if she's false, I'll be as false a lover.

SCENE XI.

SCENE, LADY MATCHLESS'S *House.*

LADY MATCHLESS, VERMILIA.

La. Match. Ha, ha, ha! love and scandal are the best sweeteners of tea.

Verm. The best embitterers, you mean; but, in my opinion, scandal is the sweetest of the two, and least dangerous.

La. Match. Love is not so dangerous to our sex as you imagine. It is a warfare wherein we always get the better, if we manage prudently; men are perfect empty bullies in it; and, as a certain poet says—

"Swift to attack, and swift to run away."

Verm. Well, but what do you intend by your assignation?

La. Match. Only to get an excuse for discarding a troublesome lover. Lookee, Vermilia, you shall attack him for me; I am afraid of a discovery myself. If you can but bring him to terms, that is, if you can procure his consent to a second treaty, I shall be very handsomely disengaged of mine.

Verm. You banter, sure. But, if you are in earnest, I must advise you to get another proxy; for I heartily hate mankind, and will forswear any conversation with them.

La. Match. Nay, but you shall force your inclinations to serve a friend.

Verm. And, pray, what has caused this sudden revolution in your temper, since, if I am not mistaken, you, but yesterday, expressed some favour for him.

La. Match. But I have found him such an out-of-fashion creature that I am heartily ashamed of him; besides, I have this morning received proposals from that prince of pretty fellows—Lord Formal.

Verm. O constancy! thou art a virtue.

La. Match. It is indeed. For virtues, like saints, are never canonized till after they are dead—which poor Constancy has been long ago.

Verm. I am afraid it proved abortive, and died before it was born. But, if it ever had being, it was most certainly feminine; and, indeed, the men have been so modest to allow all the virtues to be of our sex.

La. Match. O! we are extremely obliged to them;

they have found out housewifery to belong to us too. In short, they throw their families and their honour into our care, because they are unwilling to have the trouble of preserving them themselves.

Verm. But you rally, sure, in what you say concerning Lord Formal.

La. Match. Fie! my dear, is a title so ludicrous a thing?—But, come, you shall undertake my assignation with Wisemore.

Verm. Were I sure it would give an uneasy moment to Malvil, I wou'd; for there is nothing I wou'd stick at to be revenged on him.

La. Match. When we resolve revenge against our lovers that little rogue Love sits on his throne and laughs till he almost bursts.

Tho' ne'er so high our rage, the rogue will find
Some little, ticklish corner in the mind,
Work himself in, and make the virgin kind.
When next before her feet her lover lies,
All her resentment, in a moment, dies.
Then with a sigh the tender maid forgives,
And love's the only passion that survives.

ACT V. SCENE I.

SCENE, SIR POSITIVE'S *House.*

SIR POSITIVE, HELENA.

SIR POSITIVE.

I SAY, it was your own plot, your own contrivance, your own stratagem. You threatened him to—Hey! and he was fool enough to believe you!

Hel. He was wise enough to believe me; for I threaten'd

no impossibilities. But don't put on that severe aspect, dear uncle; for I protest it makes you look so like one of the Cæsar's heads in our long gallery.

Sir Pos. Very likely, there may be a resemblance, indeed; for Julius Cæsar, by his great grandfather's wife's great grandmother, was a Trap.

Hel. Ha, ha, ha! I am afraid we can hardly call him cousin. But pray, did he leave any legacy to us?

Sir Pos. A swinging legacy! abundance of honour!

Hel. And pray, what will all that honour sell for?

Sir Pos. Your right honour is not to be bought nor obtained: it is what a man brings into the world with him. He is as much an upstart who gets his own honour as he who gets his own estate. Take it for a maxim, child, no one can be a great man unless his father had been so before him. Your true old English honour, like your English oak, will not come to any maturity under a hundred years. It must be planted by one generation for the good of another.

Hel. But, if I were to chuse a husband, I shou'd be more forward to inquire into his own merits than those of his ancestors.

Sir Pos. Ay, ay, to be sure. You wou'd prefer one, who is likely to leave a long retinue behind him, to one who has had never so many glorious ancestors before him; and be sooner enamoured of a fine coat than a fine coat of arms. Harkee, hussy, most of these fine fellows are but mere snails, they carry their all upon their backs; and yet it is as difficult to keep our wives and daughters from the one, as our fruit from the other.

Hel. Do you think so, Sir? I have heard there is not a more dangerous place than a china-shop: take care my aunt does not bring one home in a jar, and then you may chance to see it pop forth its horns on the top of your cabinet.

Sir Pos. [*Aside.*] Ha! I must own, I do not like these morning rambles.

Hel. Lookee, Sir, I can make discoveries to you; and, since my aunt has falsely accused me with being the occasion of Sir Apish's behaviour to-day, I will tell you out of revenge what I would never have told you out of love. In short, my aunt has——

Sir Pos. How! what?

Hel. Planted something that will branch to maturity in less than a hundred years, ha, ha, ha! She has set a modern front upon your old tabernacle, ha, ha, ha!—I hear the coach stop this moment. Step but into that closet, and you shall hear her convict herself.—I'll bring her to confession.

Sir Pos. [*Aside.*] Hum! methinks I grow suspicious.

Hel. Nay, nay, nay, if you don't accept the trial, I shall proclaim you dare not.

Sir Pos. Lookee, hussy, if you wrong my lady, by the right hand of the Traps——

Hel. Any, any punishment. But fly, she's just here.

SCENE II.

LADY TRAP, HELENA.

La. Trap. I am fatigued to death.—Oh! your servant, miss: but, perhaps, I ought to say, mistress; your husband may have changed your title since I saw you.

Hel. And your ladyship may have changed your husband's title—But that change has been made long ago.

La. Trap. What do you mean, madam?

Hel. Ha, ha, ha! dear aunt, the world knows the use of china-shops, tho' Sir Positive does not.

La. Trap. You seem to know, madam, I think, more than is consistent with your years.

Hel. And you seem to practice, madam, more than is consistent with yours. The theory becomes my age much better than the practice does yours.

La. Trap. Your age! marry come up; you are always boasting of that youth and beauty which you have.

Hel. That's more excusable than to boast of that youth and beauty which we have not.

La. Trap. I know whom you reflect on.—I thank my stars, indeed, I am no girl; and as for beauty, if my glass be allowed a judge——

Hel. A very corrupt judge: for a glass is so well-bred a thing, that it tells every woman she is a beauty. O! it is the greatest flatterer in the world to our faces; but the reverse in one thing, for it never disparages us behind our backs.

La. Trap. Malapert creature! A girl is now-a-days no sooner out of her leading strings than she sets up for a toast. And as the girls are women before their time, so the men are children all their lives; for they will be devouring the green fruit.

Hel. And sure the green is preferable to the withered, aunt. Come, come, madam, you had better make me your friend and confidant: for, if you declare war, I shall be able to enlist more soldiers than you. But here's my hand; and if you will let me into your secrets I'll give you the honour of a woman never to disclose them.

SCENE III.

To them SIR APISH, MERITAL *disguised as a Parson.*

Sir Apish. Lady Trap, I am your most obedient; sweet mistress Helena, I am everlastingly yours.

La. Trap. Sir Apish, your behaviour this morning staggered us; but I am glad to find you are relapsed.

Sir Apish. He, he, he! it was all a jest, upon my word; as I question not but my future behaviour will explain to that lady.

Hel. It has already explained you, Sir, to me, to be the greatest jest in nature.

La. Trap. Sir Apish, you know too much of the world to regard a young lady's coyness: and I assure you, Sir, it is all affected; for she is ever repeating your name, even in her sleep. Don't blush, child. But you'll excuse the faults of youth: she will learn more sense.

Hel. I don't know whether you move my anger or my pity most. But for that thing there, I'd have him know, I scorn and detest him.

Sir Apish. I wou'd not have your ladyship's chagrin at my bride's expression; for I'll engage we shall hate one another with as much good-breeding as any couple under the sun.

Mer. Give me the permission to lead you, madam.

Sir Apish. [*Apart to* Lady Trap.] If you'd leave Miss a few minutes with Mr. Parson here, I wou'd engage for his success.—He is a noted matchmaker.

La. Trap. Niece, pray be attentive to that reverend gentleman; he will convince you of your errors.—Come, Sir Apish, we'll take a turn in the dining-room; Sir Positive will not be long.

[*Apart to* Sir Apish.

[*These two speeches spoke together.*]

Hel. [*Aside*] Sir Positive is safe, I'm sure, till I give him an opportunity to sneak off; so I've a reprieve at least.

SCENE IV.

HELENA, MERITAL.

Hel. What, gone?——Ha!

Mer. Be not frightened, dear madam; for I have nothing of sanctity but the masque, I assure you.

[*discovering himself.*

Hel. I believe it, nor of any other virtue.

Mer. Very prettily frowned.—I know some ladies who have practised a smile twenty years, without becoming it so well.—But, come, we have no time to lose.

Hel. No, to upbraid you were loss of time, indeed; for the remonstrances of an injured woman have but little weight with such harden'd sinners.

Mer. Hum! the sight of a gown has not inspired you, I hope: you don't intend to preach; but if you do, the wedding, you know, is always before the sermon,—— which is one of the chief things wherein hanging and matrimony disagree. [*Aside.*

Hel. Mr. Merital, I liked your raillery well enough whilst I believed you innocent. But as that gaiety in dress, which gives a bloom to beauty, shews deformity in its worst light; so that mirth and humour, which are vastly amiable in the innocent, look horrid in the guilty.

Mer. Are you really in earnest, child?

Hel. That question surprises me, when you know I was witness to your last night's adventure.

Mer. Faith, my dear, I might have been more justly surprised that you should make me an assignation, and send your aunt to keep it.

Hel. I make you an assignation! I'll never see you more.

Mer. Turn, mighty conqueress, turn your eyes this way,
And hear at once your priest and lover pray.
In vain, by frowns, you wou'd the world subdue,
For when, with all your might, you've knit your brow
Your grandmother more wrinkles has than you.

Ha, ha, ha! don't put on those severe looks, dear Helena; good humour sets off a lady's face more than jewels.

Hel. I wish my looks had power to blast you.

Mer. No, no, madam, I have a sort of armour called common-sense that's frown-proof, I assure you. Your smiles may melt, but your frowns will never pierce it. What, to make me an assignation with your own hand, then send your aunt for a proxy? My good nature, indeed, gave it the turn of a trial,—tho' she was a fitter object to try my vigour than my constancy. [*Half aside.*

Hel. I write to you yesterday!

Mer. Why, I cannot positively say it was you; for I begin to think myself in Don Quixotte's case, and that some wicked enchanters have transmographied my Dulcinea. I'll leave it to your own judgment, whether you are not a little altered since you writ this. [*Shews a letter.*

Hel. Ha! the letter I copied before my aunt! then I've wronged him, indeed. Unheard of baseness!—— Mr. Merital, perhaps my suspicions have been too ill grounded; but for your reproaches, Sir—

Mer. Nay, if there be a mystery in it, and I am guilty of undeserved reproaches, your justice cannot, shall not pardon me, 'till I have atoned for it with a ten years' service. Yet impute what I have said to the sincerity of my love; my passions sympathize with yours; and if one wild delusion has possessed us, let us partake the equal joy of its discovery.

Hel. That discovery is too long to be made now; but there is a riddle in that letter which will surprize you.

Mer. Let then those lovely eyes re-assume their sweetness, and like pure gold, rise brighter from the flames.

Hel. Well, well, you know your own terms, a ten years' siege, and then——

Mer. Ah! but will not the garrison be starved in that long time? and I shall shut it up with a very close

blockade—So you had best surrender now on honourable conditions.

Hel. Well, but you'll allow the garrison to make a sally first.—Sir Positive, uncle, ha, ha, ha! come and help me to laugh.—The same worthy gentleman, who came after your wife last night, is now come after your niece.

SCENE V.

To them SIR POSITIVE *from the closet.*

Sir Pos. A brave girl, a very brave girl! Why, why, why, what a pox do you want here, Sir?

Hel. Bless me, how he stares! I wonder he is not confined: I'm afraid he will take away somebody's life.

Sir Pos. I believe his intention is to give somebody life: such as he oftener increase families than diminish them.

Hel. Or perhaps the poor gentleman is an itinerant preacher. Did you come to preach to us, Sir?

Mer. Do you take me for the Ordinary of Bedlam, madam? Was I to reason with you, it should be by the doctrine of fire and faggot.

Hel. Say you so? Nay then, I believe, uncle, he is a popish inquisitor.

Sir Pos. An inquisitor after fortunes, I suppose. Ah! Sir, is not that your pious errand? You are one of the royal society of fortune-hunters? eh!

Hel. I'll secure his masquerading garb among the trophies of our family.

SCENE VI.

SIR POSITIVE, MERITAL.

Sir Pos. Well, Sir, and pray have you any pretensions

to my niece? Where's your estate, Sir? what's your title, Sir? what's your coat of arms? Does your estate lie in *terra firma*, or in the stocks?

Mer. In a stock of assurance, Sir. My cash is all brass, and I carry it in my forehead, for fear of pick-pockets.

Sir Pos. Are there no guardians to be cheated, no cuckolds to be made, but Sir Positive Trap? I'd have you know, Sir, there has not been a cuckold amongst the Traps since they were a family.

Mer. That is, Sir, I suppose, a tacit insinuation that you are the first of your family.

Sir Pos. You are ignorant as well as impudent. The first of my family! The whole world knows, that neither I, nor my father before me, have added one foot of land to our estate; and my grandfather smoked his pipe in the same easy chair that I do.

Mer. Very likely.—And what then?

Sir Pos. What then! Why, then there's the door, and then I desire you'd go out. Upstart, quotha! Sir Positive Trap an upstart! I had rather be called knave. I had rather be the first rogue of a good family, than the first honest man of a bad one.

Mer. Indeed!

Sir Pos. Ay, indeed; for do we not upbraid the son whose father was hanged; whereas many a man, who deserves to be hanged, was never upbraided in his whole life.

Mer. Oons! how am I jilted! [*Aside* Lookee, Sir Positive, to be plain, I did come hither with a design of inveigling your niece; but she shall now die a maid for me. I imposed on Sir Apish, as I wou'd have done on you; but you see I have failed: so you may smoke on in your easy chair, Sir Trap.

Sir Pos. So, so, I began to suspect Sir Apish was in the plot; but I'm glad to find my mistake.

SCENE VII.

SIR POSITIVE, LADY TRAP.

Sir Pos. O, my dear lady, are you come? I have such a discovery! such a rare discovery! you will so hug me——

La. Trap. Not so close as you do your discovery, my dear.—But where's Helena?

Sir Pos. He, he, he, rogue! conjurer! My lady's a conjurer! why, 'tis about her I am going to discover. But where's the baronet?

La. Trap. He waits below with his chaplain.

Sir Pos. His chaplain! ha, ha, ha! 'tis a rogue in the chaplain's habit; the wild young spark that has haunted my niece so long.

La. Trap. How!

Sir Pos. Ay, and he is stole off without his disguise, which the girl has secured as a trophy of her victory.

La. Trap. Cheated! ruin'd! undone!

Sir Pos. Ha! what?

La. Trap. She is gone, she is lost——without there ——she's gone, I say, and we are cheated.

Sir Pos. How, by the right hand of the Traps!

La. Trap. By the wrong head of the Traps. I thought what your discovery wou'd be.—Where's Sir Apish?

[*To a servant entering.*

Serv. Gone out with his chaplain and another gentleman, madam.

La. Trap. Pursue them, pursue them.

Sir Pos. Get down my broad-sword and bandaliers, and Sir Gregory's blunderbuss. Fly, fly.

SCENE VIII. *The Piazza.*

MALVIL *meeting* CATCHIT *masqued.*

Malv. So I find she's exact to her assignation.—Well encountered, madam: what, I suppose I am not the game you look for. O thou perfidious, false, dissembling woman! Nay, do not offer to stir, for you are betrayed, and by all the powers of love you've wronged, I will expose you. Come, unmasque, unmasque this instant, or——

Catch. [*unmasquing.*] I protest you are very rude, Mr. Malvil; I wou'd not be seen here for the world.

Malv. Ha! now I thank my stars indeed. Thou vile intriguer, forge some lie to excuse thyself in an instant, or it shall be thy last.

Catch. O lud! you will frighten me into fits.

Malv. Come, confess how you came here? by what means did Wisemore get my letter? Confess all; and if I find you faultering in one syllable, I'll cram it down your throat with my sword.

Catch. O lud! I——I——I——

Malv. What, you belied Vermilia in all you said? Speak—you belied her, I say?

Catch. O! O! but will you pardon me then?

Malv. Speak the truth, I will pardon you; but if I ever discover the least falsehood in what you now tell me, if you had a thousand lives you shou'd forfeit them.

Catch. Why, then, indeed, it was all false: she never said a kind thing of Mr. Merital in her life—and—and, so, when you gave me the letter, I suspected what it was, and so I carried it to my mistress; and Lady Matchless

being by, she took it, and sealed, and set it to Mr.——, and so, my lady and she went into the park this morning: and Lady Matchless made an appointment in her name, and wou'd have had her kept it, and she wou'd not—and so I was sent.

Malv. And how!—how did the devil tempt you to belie her to me?

Catch. O lud! Sir, it was not the devil, indeed; you had often teazed and promised me, if I wou'd discover your rival; and, heaven knows, you have none in the world.

Malv. But on what embassy was you sent hither?

Catch. Here's a letter which, I believe, will tell you. But pray don't keep me, for we are all very busy; my Lady Matchless is to be married in a day or two to my Lord Formal.

Malv. How! to my Lord Formal?

Catch. Yes, Sir.

Malv. Well, tell her you delivered the letter as you was ordered. Don't mention a word of me.—Be trusty now, and I'll forgive the past.

Catch. I will, indeed, Sir.—O lud! I shall not recover it this week.

SCENE IX.

MALVIL, WISEMORE.

Malv. Wisemore, most opportunely arrived. I find you are more concerned in this assignation than I imagined, as this will explain to you.

WISEMORE *takes the letter, and reads.*

'SIR,

'You will be surprised at the news of so sudden a 'conquest; but, I hope, that surprise will be an agree-

'able one, when you know it is over a woman of a con-
'siderable fortune: and if seven thousand a year can
'make me as acceptable to Mr. Wisemore as his virtue
'renders him lovely to me, I shall meet with a favour-
'able answer; for which the messenger who brings you
'this will attend an hour after the delivery. Yours till
'then, 'INCOGNITA.

'P. S. I am glad I can inform you that my rival is
'this day to be married to another.'

How received you this letter?

Malv. From the very person who convey'd you mine.

Wisem. O Malvil, I find myself concerned indeed, and, I fear, fatally.

Malv. I am sorry to be the messenger of ill news—but I just now heard your mistress is carrying on a treaty with one of the greatest coxcombs in town.

Wisem. There is but one way, and I must beg your immediate assistance. I have contrived a stratagem to convince her of the mercenary views of her pretended admirers.

Malv. But do you draw any of your fears from that letter? For I have very good reason to believe it came from Lady Matchless.

Wisem. Impossible!

Malv. I am confident it did.

Wisem. By heav'n, thou hast revived a spark of hope.

Malv. And lovers must nurse up feeble, infant hopes, till they grow big, and ripen into certain joys.

Wisem. I will do so: for I have always looked on love as on a sea, whose latitude no one ever discovered; and therefore,

Like mariners, without the compass tost,
We may be near our port when we esteem it lost.

SCENE X.

SCENE, LADY MATCHLESS'S *House*.

LADY MATCHLESS, LORD FORMAL, SIR APISH, VERMILIA, AND RATTLE.

La. Match. I hope the sincerity which I have discovered in your lordship's passion, and the glorious character you bear in the world, will excuse my easy consent.

L. Form. I would not be so ill-bred as to blush; but your ladyship's compliments have really raised an inordinate flushing in my cheeks.

Verm. Why, my dear, this will be a surprise to the town, indeed.

Rattle. I'm sure it is no agreeable one to me. [*Aside.* Why, widow, do you intend to leave me in the lurch?

Sir Apish. And me in the lurch, too, madam? I assure you, I have refused a great fortune on your account. Has your ladyship forgot your declaration yesterday.

La. Match. Yesterday! O unpolite! are you so conversant in the *beau-monde*, and don't know that women, like quicksilver, are never fixed till they are dead?

Rattle. Agad, they are more like gold, I think; for they are never fixed but by dross. [*Aside.*

SCENE XI.

To them MERITAL, HELENA.

Hel. Dear cousin Matchless!

La. Match. My dear, this is very kind; being earlier with me than my expectation is a double favour.

Mer. It may be called a double favour, madam, for you are partly obliged for it to your humble servant.

La. Match. How's this, Helena?

Hel. I don't know, cousin; I was weary of my old guardian, I think, and so I chose a new one.

Mer. Yes, madam, and so we preferred the church to the chancery, to save expenses.

La. Match. O, it was a most commendable prudence. So you are married.—Well, give you joy, good people.—But, methinks you shou'd not have made your guardian your heir. [*To* Helena.] No wise person ever suffered an heir to be trustee to his own estate.

Mer. Not till at years of discretion, madam; and I'm sure, the men shou'd be that when they marry.

La. Match. And the women too, or they never will.

Hel. Why so, cousin?

La. Match. Because it is probable they may soon after run mad. You see, my lord, I have not the highest notions of a married state; therefore, you may be sensible how high an opinion I must entertain of your merit, which can persuade me to it.

Mer. Do you intend to follow our example, Lady Matchless?

Rattle. I can bear no longer. Lookee, my lord, if matrimony be your play, fighting must be your prologue. [*Apart to* Lord Formal.

L. Form. He, he, he! Mr. Rattle, fighting is more commonly the epilogue to that play.

Rattle. Damn your joke, Sir, either walk out with me, or I shall use you ill. [*Apart.*

L. Form. Then you will show your ill-breeding, and give me an opportunity of displaying my gallantry, by sacrificing the affront to the presence of the ladies.

Mer. Fie, fie, gentlemen, let us have no quarrels, pray.

Rattle. 'Sdeath! Sir, but we will: I will not resign m mistress, Sir.

Sir Apish. Nor I neither; and so, madam, if you don't stand to your promise, I hope you'll give me leave to sue you for it.

La. Match. I have told you already, that a lady's promise is an insect which naturally dies almost as soon as it is born.

SCENE XII.

To them WISEMORE, *in a serjeant's gown, his hat over his ears.*

Wisem. Pray, which is the Lady Matchless?

La. Match. Have you any business with me, Sir?

L. Form. This must be a very ill-bred gentleman, or he wou'd not come before so much good company with his hat on. [*Aside.*

Wisem. It concerns an affair, madam, which will be soon so public that I may declare it openly. There is one Mr. John Matchless, who, being heir at law to your ladyship's late husband, intends to prosecute his right, which, as his council, out of a particular regard to your ladyship, I shall farther let you know, I am persuaded we shall make good—and, I'm afraid, it will touch you very sensibly.

La. Match. My cousin John Matchless heir at law to Sir William! I wou'd not have you be under any apprehension on my account, good Sir; I am afraid he has a better right to Bedlam than my estate.

Mer. Be not concerned, madam; a declaration of a title is not always a proof.

Verm. } We condole you heartily, my dear, on this
Hel. } bad news.

La. Match. Ladies, I thank you for your kind concern; but do assure you, it gives me none.

Wisem. I am sensible you will find your error; my clerk will be here immediately with the ejectment.

L. Formal. I perceive the reason of her ladyship's haste to be married. [*Aside.*

La. Match. What can this mean! I know my title to be secure; it must be some trumped up cheat; and I'll try to divert the chagrin of my friends by a trial of my lovers, whom, I already know, I shall find guilty. [*Aside.*] ——Well, as most misfortunes bring their allay with them, so this dispute of my estate will give me an opportunity to distinguish the sincerity of a lover.

[*Looks on* Formal.

L. Form. He, he, he! it has always been my good fortune to conduce to the entertainment of the ladies, and I find your ladyship has a most inexhaustible vein of raillery.

La. Match. Raillery, my lord!

L. Form. Ah, madam, it were an unpardonable vanity in me to esteem it otherwise. It wou'd be contrary to all the rules of good manners for me to offer myself up at the shrine of your beauty. Ah! 'tis a sacrifice worthy a higher title than mine. Indeed, I have some thoughts of purchasing, which, when I do, I shall throw myself at your feet in raptures; but till then I am, with the greatest distance, madam, your ladyship's most obsequious humble servant.

Rattle. Why, indeed, I think all raillery is unseasonable on so serious an occasion; therefore, to drop the jest, dear widow, I do assure you, all that has passed between us has been mere gallantry; for I have been long since engaged to a widow lady in the city.

Sir Apish. And to shew you, madam, that no slights from you can lessen my affection, I do entirely relinquish all pretensions to any promise whatsoever.

SCENE XIII.

To them MALVIL.

Malv. Where's, where's my injured mistress? where's Vermilia? O, see at your feet the most miserable of mankind!

Verm. What mean you, Sir?

Malv. Think not I would extenuate; no, I come to blazon out my crimes, to paint them in the utmost cast of horror, to court, not fly the severity of justice; for death's to me a blessing. Ah! my friend's blood cries out for vengeance on me; and jealousy, rage, madness, and false honour, stand ready witnesses against me.—[*To* Vermil.] Of you, Madam, I am to beg a pardon for your wronged innocence.—[*To Lady* Match.] But to you I have a harder task; to implore it, for having deprived you of the best of lovers, whose dying sighs were loaded with your name.—Yes, the last words your Wisemore uttered, were to implore eternal blessings on you; your Wisemore, whom this rash, this fatal hand has slain.

[*Lady* Matchless *sinks into the arms of* Vermilia.]

Mer. Help, help! she faints!

Hel. A glass of water, the hartshorn immediately.

Rattle. Rustic's dead then, hey? Poor rustic!

Verm. How do you, dear?

La. Match. O! I shall rave, my frantic brain will burst: and did he bless me with his latest breath? he should have cursed me rather, for I alone am guilty. Oh! I have wildly played away his life—Then, take my fortune all, since he is gone, to reward whose merit I only valued

riches. But now farewel content, greatness, happiness, and all the sweets of life.——I'll study to be miserable.

Wisem. O never, never; be bless'd as love, and life, and happiness can make you——be blessed as I am now. [*Discovering himself, and running to her.*

La. Match. And art thou then my Wisemore? [*After a long pause.*

Wisem. And do I live to hear you call me yours? O my heart's joy! my everlasting bliss!

La. Match. And can you generously forgive?

Wisem. O name it not, but swear you never will revoke what you have said.

La. Match. O, would I have worlds to give thee; for all the happiness I can bestow is nothing to the merit of your love.

Wisem. My heart o'erflows with raptures. Oh! my tender love, now do I live indeed—

Mer. Why, after these high flights, Ned, I am afraid wishing you joy will be too low a phrase.

Wisem. Dear Merital, I thank you.—But here am I eternally indebted; for I shall always attribute my happiness (next to this lady) to your friendship. [*To* Malvil.

Malv. Be assured it gives me an equal satisfaction, as if I had procured my own.

Mer. I have known two friends embrace just before cutting of throats; but I believe you are the first who ever embraced after it.

Rattle. Formal. [*Sheepishly.*

L. Form. By my title, I am perfectly amazed.

Sir Apish. We are all bit, agad! [*Aside.*

Mer. Come, Harry, put the best face you can on the matter; tho' I know you have a little chagrin in your heart—As for his lordship, the lady may be a widow again before he gets his title.—And my friend Sir Apish has refused a very fine lady this morning before.

Sir Apish. Yes, I had two strings to my bow; both golden ones, egad! and both cracked.

Verm. Dear Matchless, this sudden revolution of your fortune has so amazed me, that I can hardly recover myself to congratulate you on it.

La. Match. Well, but I hope you will not see your friend embarked on a second voyage, and hesitate at undertaking the first.

Verm. If I was sure my voyage would be as short as yours has been; but matrimony is too turbulent a sea to be ventured on in so light a vessel as every little blast can overset.

Malv. Madam, when Mrs. Catchit has discovered the whole affair to you, as she has done to me, I doubt not but your good-nature will seal my pardon, since excess of love caused the offence.

La. Match. Nay, we must all sue.

Mer. }
Hel. } All, all.

Verm. Well, to avoid so much importunity, and to shew you the power of a prevalent example—In hopes of future amendment, Mr. Malvil, here—take my hand.

Malv. O my fairest, softest! I have no words to express my gratitude, or my love.

Verm. Pray let them both be understood then; for we have had so many raptures already, they must be but a dull repetition.

L. Form. When it is in vain to strive against the stream, all well-bred men sail with it. [*Aside.*] Ladies, I beg leave to presume to advance with my compliments of congratulation on this glorious occasion. I must own your ladyship's choice has something novel in it; but, by the sanction of so great an authority, I don't question, but it may be reconciled with the rules of consummate good-breeding.

Sir Apish. I am always his lordship's second. Ladies, I heartily wish you joy, upon my word.

Rattle. And so do I, widow.—This fellow will be poisoned before the honey-moon's out. [*Aside.*

SCENE *the last.*

SIR POSITIVE TRAP, LADY TRAP, LADY MATCHLESS, LORD FORMAL, VERMILIA, HELENA, WISEMORE, MALVIL, MERITAL, RATTLE, SIR APISH SIMPLE.

Sir Pos. O cousin, I am undone, and ruined! The Traps are abused, disgraced, dishonoured!

La. Match. What's the matter, Sir Positive?

Sir Pos. I am undone, my niece is lost and ruined.

Hel. I had been so, Sir, but for the interposition of a worthy gentleman here.

Mer. It is, indeed, my happy fate to be——

Sir Pos. Is it so? it is so? and I believe this will be your happy fate. [*Pointing to his neck.*] She is an heiress, and you are guilty of felony, and shall be hanged, with the whole company, your abettors.

L. Form. This gentleman must have had a barbarous education. [*Aside.*

Mer. Lookee, madam, as you expect that what has passed between us shall be kept secret—

[*To Lady Trap.*

La. Trap. [*To* Mer.] I understand you.—Sir Positive, be appeased, and leave this matter to me.

Sir Pos. I am calm.

La. Match. My cousin, Sir, is married to a gentleman of honour, and one who, I doubt not, loves her.—By your resentment, you will call your conduct, not hers, into question.

Sir Pos. Then you have been her adviser, I suppose.

La. Match. If I have, cousin, you cannot be angry, since it is an advice I am like to follow myself.

Sir Pos. Why, what, are you going to be married again?

Wisem. Sir Positive, I hope shortly to be your relation.

Sir Pos. That's more than I do, Sir, till I know your name and family.

Wisem. You shall both, Sir. My name is Wisemore.

Sir Pos. Wisemore! Wisemore! why, it is a good name—but I thought that family had been extinct.—Well, cousin, I am glad to see you have not married a snuff-box.

La. Match. To perfect the good humour of the company, and since dinner is not yet ready, I'll entertain you with a song, which was sent me by an unknown hand. Is Mr. Hemhem there? Sir, if you will oblige us; gentlemen and ladies, please to sit.

SONG.

I.

Ye nymphs of Britain, to whose eyes
The world submits the glorious prize
Of beauty to be due;
Ah! guard it with assiduous care,
Let neither flattery ensnare,
Nor wealth your hearts subdue.

II.

Old Bromio's ranked among the beaus;
Young Cynthio solitary goes,
Unheeded by the fair!

Ask you then what this preference gives?
Six Flanders mares the former drives,
The latter but a pair.

III.

Let meaner things be bought and sold,
But beauty never truck'd for gold;
Ye fair, your value prove:
And since the world's a price too low,
Like heaven, your ecstacies bestow
On constancy and love.

IV.

But still, ye generous maids, beware,
Since hypocrites to heaven there are,
And to the beauteous too:
Do not too easily confide,
Let every lover well be try'd,
And well reward the true.

The COMPANY *advance.*

Wisem. The song is not without a moral.—And now, ladies, I think myself bound to a solemn recantation of every slander I have thrown upon your sex: for I am convinced, that our complaints against you flow generally (if not always) more from our want of merit than your want of justice.

For when vain fools or fops your hearts pursue,
To such the charming prize is never due:
But when the men of sense their passions prove,
You seldom fail rewarding 'em with love.
Justly on them the fair their hearts bestow,
Since they, alone, the worth of virtue know.

EPILOGUE:

SPOKEN BY MISS ROBINSON, JUN.

Our author, full of sorrow and repentance,
Has sent me here—to mitigate his sentence.
To you, tremendous critics in the pit,
Who on his first offence in judgment sit!
He pleads—Oh gad! how terrible his case is!
For my part, I'm frighten'd by your faces.
Think on his youth—it is his first essay;
He may in time, perhaps,—atonement pay,
If but repriev'd this execution day.—
Methinks I see some elder critic rise,
And darting furious justice from his eyes,
Cry, 'Zounds! what means the brat? why all this fuss?
'What are his youth and promises to us?
'For shou'd we from severity refrain,
'We soon should have the coxcomb here again.
'And, brothers, such examples may invite
'A thousand other senseless rogues to write!'
From you then—ye toupets—he hopes defence:
You'll not condemn him—for his want of sense—
What, now you'll say, I warrant with a sneer,
'He's chose too young an advocate, my dear!'
Yet boast not (for if my own strength I know)
I am a match sufficient—for a beau!
Lastly, to you, ye charmers, he applies,
For in your tender bosoms mercy lies,
As certain as destruction in your eyes.
Let but that lovely circle of the fair
Their approbation, by their smiles, declare
Then let the critics damn him—if they dare.

THE

TEMPLE BEAU,

A COMEDY.

FIRST ACTED IN 1729.

Non aliter, quam qui adverso vix Flumine Lembum
Remigiis subigit. VIRG. Georg.

Indignor quidquam reprehendi, non quia crassè
Compositum, illepidève putetur, sed quia nobis.
HOR. Art. Poet.

PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY MR. RALPH, AND SPOKEN BY MR. GIFFARD.

HUMOUR and wit, in each politer age,
Triumphant, rear'd the trophies of the stage.
But only farce, and show, will now go down,
And HARLEQUIN'S the darling of the town.
WILL'S has resign'd its old pretence to wit,
And beaus appear, where critics used to sit.
BUTTON himself, provok'd at wit's decline,
Now lets his house, and swears he'll burn his sign.
Ah! shou'd all others that on wit depend,
Like him provok'd; like him their dealings end;
Our theatres might take th' example too,
And players starve themselves——as Authors do.
  But if the gay, the courtly world, disdain
To hear the Muses and their sons complain;
Each injur'd Bard shall to this refuge fly,
And find that comfort which the Great deny:
Shall frequently employ this infant stage,
And boldly aim to wake a dreaming age.
The comic muse, in smiles severely gay,
Shall scoff at vice, and laugh its crimes away.
The voice of sorrow pine in tragic lays,
And claim your tears, as the sincerest praise.
  Merit, like Indian gems, is rarely found,
Obscure, 'tis sullied with the common ground:
But when it blazes in the world's broad eye,
All own the charms they pass'd unheeded by.
Be you the first t'explore the latent prize,
And raise its value, as its beauties rise.
Convince that town, which boasts it better breeding,
That riches——are not all that you exceed in.
Merit, wherever found, is still the same,
And this our stage may be the road to fame.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Sir Avarice Pedant, ...	MR. COLLET.
Sir Harry Wilding, ...	MR. PINKETHMAN.
Wilding, ...	MR. GIFFARD.
Veromil, ...	MR. W. GIFFARD.
Valentine, ...	MR. WILLIAMS.
Pedant, ...	MR. BULLOCK.
Pincet, ...	MR. BARDIN.

WOMEN.

Lady Lucy Pedant, ...	MRS. GIFFARD.
Lady Gravely, ...	MRS. HAUGHTON.
Bellaria, ...	MRS. PURDEN.
Clarissa, ...	MRS. SEAL.

TAYLOR, PERRIWIG-MAKER, SERVANTS, &c.

SCENE, LONDON.

THE

TEMPLE BEAU.

ACT I. SCENE I.

SCENE, *an Anti-chamber in* SIR AVARICE PEDANT'S *House.*

LADY LUCY PEDANT, LADY GRAVELY.

LADY LUCY, *entering in a passion, followed by the* LADY GRAVELY.

No more of your lectures, dear sister. Must I be fatigu'd every morning with an odious repetition of fulsome, dull, antiquated maxims, extracted from old philosophers and divines, who no more practised what they wrote, than you practise what you read? Sure, never woman had such a time on't!—Between a husband mad with avarice, a son-in-law mad with learning, a niece mad with love—and a sister—

L. Gra. Ay, what am I? I'd be glad to know what I am.

L. Lucy. The world knows what you are—

L. Gra. How, Madam!—the world knows nothing of me.

L. Lucy. It says it does; it talks of you very freely, child. First, that you are not so young as you would seem; nor so handsome, or good as you do seem; that

your actions are as much disguised by your words, as your skin by paint; that the virtue in your mouth no more proceeds from the purity of your heart, than the colour in your cheeks does from the purity of your blood.

L. Gra. Very fine, indeed!

L. Lucy. That your ardency to improve the world is too often rank envy; that you are not angry with the deformities of the mind, but the beauties of the person: for it is notorious, that you never spoke well of a handsome woman, nor ill of an ugly one.

L. Gra. Impudent scandal!

L. Lucy. That you rail at the diversions of the town, for several reasons: but the love of goodness has nothing to do with any. Assemblies, because you are very little regarded in them; operas, because you have no ear; plays, because you have no taste; balls, because you can't dance: and lastly—that you went to church, twice a day, a whole year and half, because—you was in love with the parson; ha, ha, ha!

L. Gra. As ill as that malicious smile becomes you, I am glad you put it on: for it convinces me that what you have said is purely your own suggestion, which I know how to despise. Or, perhaps, you call a set of flirts, the world: by such a world I would always be spoken ill of: the slander of some people is as great a recommendation as the praise of others. For one is as much hated by the dissolute world, on the score of virtue, as by the good, on that of vice. Sister, your malicious invectives against me reflect on yourself only: I abhor the motive, and I scorn the effect.

L. Lucy. Nay, but how ungenerous is this! when you have often told me, that to put one in mind of faults is the truest sign of friendship; and that sincerity, in private, should give no more pain, than flattery, in public, pleasure.

L. Gra. And yet (methinks) you could not bear plain-dealing just now. But I'm glad that your last hint has awakened me to a perfect sense of my duty; therefore sister, since we are in private, I'll tell you what the world says of you.——In the first place, then, it says that you are both younger and handsomer than you seem.

L. Lucy. Nay, this is flattery, my dear!

L. Gra. No, indeed, my dear! for that folly and affectation have disguis'd you all over with an air of dotage and deformity.

L. Lucy. This carries an air of sincerity———thank you, my dear.

L. Gra. That admiration is the greatest pleasure, and to obtain it, the whole business of your life; but that the ways you take to it are so preposterous, one would be almost persuaded you aimed rather at contempt; for the actions of an infant seem the patterns of your conduct. When you are in the play-house, you seem to think yourself on the stage; and when you are at church, I should swear you thought yourself in the playhouse, did I not know you never think at all. In every circle you engross the whole conversation, where you say a thousand silly things, and laugh at them all; by both which the world is always convinced, that you have very fine teeth, and very bad sense.

L. Lucy. Well, I will convince you, for I must laugh at that; ha, ha, ha!

L. Gra. That you are not restrain'd from unlawful pleasures by the love of virtue, but variety; and that your husband is not safe from having no rival, but from having a great many: for your heart is like a coffee-house, where the beaus frisk in and out, one after another; and you are as little the worse for them, as the other is the better; for one lover, like one poison, is your antidote against another.

L. Lucy. Ha, ha, ha! I like your comparison of love and poison, for I hate them both alike.

L. Gra. And yet you are in love, and have been in love a long while.

L. Lucy. Dear soul, tell me who the happy creature is, for I am sure he'll think himself so.

L. Gra. That I question not; for I mean yourself.

L. Lucy. Ha, ha, ha! and I'm sure you like my taste.

L. Gra. In short, to end my character, the world gives you the honour of being the most finish'd coquet in town.

L. Lucy. And I believe it is as little news to you, that you have that of leading the vast, grave, solemn body of prudes: so let us be friends——since, like the fiery partizans of state, we aim only at the same thing, by several ways: their aim is a place at court—ours is—this, my dear sister!

L. Gra. (Now would my arms were fire-brands—I would embrace you then with better will.) [*Aside.*

SCENE II.

To them YOUNG PEDANT.

Y. Ped. Hey-day! what, is it customary here for you women to kiss one another? It intimates the men to be scarce, or backward in my opinion.

L. Lucy. And so taking advantage of the dearth of gallants, you are come to town to be enrolled in the number.

Y. Ped. May I be expelled the university that day: if your women want fools 'till I turn one to please them, they shall want them——'till their fools turn scholars like me, or 'till they themselves turn Penelopes, that is (*breviter*) till the world's turn'd topsy-turvey.

L. Lucy. Or, till such illiterate pedants as you turn fine gentlemen.

Y. Ped. Illiterate! Mother-in-law? — You are a woman. [*Scornfully.*

L. Lucy. You are a coxcomb.

Y. Ped. I rejoice in the irony. To be called coxcomb by a woman is as sure a sign of sense, as to be called a rogue by a courtier is of honesty.

L. Gra. You should except your relations, nephew; and truly, for the generality of women, I am much of your opinion.

Y. Ped. Are you? then you are a woman of sense, aunt! a very great honour to your sex.

L. Lucy. Did you ever hear so conceited, ignorant a wretch?

Y. Ped. Ignorant!——Know, Madam, that I have revolv'd more volumes than you have done pages; I might say lines. More sense has gone in at these eyes—

L. Lucy. Than will ever come out of that mouth, I believe.——Ha, ha, ha!

Y. Ped. What do you laugh at? I could convince you, that what you said then was only false wit. Look ye, mother, when you have been conversant with the Greek poets, you'll make better jests.

L. Lucy. And when you have conversed with a French dancing-master, you'll make a better figure; till when, you had best converse with yourself. Come, sister.

Y. Ped. Sooner than converse with thee, may I be obliged to communicate with a drunken, idle, illiterate soph: a creature, of all, my aversion.

SCENE III.

SIR AVARICE PEDANT *and* YOUNG PEDANT.

Sir Av. How now, son! what puts you into this passion? I never knew anything got by being in a passion.

Y. Ped. Sir, with your peace, I am not in a passion; I have read too much philosophy to have my passions irritated by women.

Sir Av. You seem, indeed, to have read a great deal; for you said several things last night beyond my understanding: but I desire you would give me some account of your improvement in that way which I recommended to you at your going to the university; I mean that useful part of learning, the arts of getting money: I hope your tutor has, according to my orders, instill'd into you a tolerable insight into stock-jobbing. I hope to see you make a figure at Garraway's, boy.

Y. Ped. Sir, he has instructed me in a much nobler science—Logic.—I have read all that has been written on that subject, from the time of Aristotle, to that great and learned modern, Burgersdicius; truly, almost a cart load of books.

Sir Av. Have they taught you the art to get a cart load of money?

Y. Ped. They have taught me the art of getting knowledge. Logic is in learning, what the compass is in navigation. It is the guide by which our reason steers in the pursuit of true philosophy.

Sir Av. Did ever mortal man hear the like!—Have I been at this expence to breed my son a philosopher? I tremble at the name; it brings the thought of poverty into my mind. Why, do you think if your old philo-

sophers were alive, any one would speak to them, any one would pay their bills!—Ah! these universities are fit for nothing but to debauch the principles of young men; to poison their minds with romantic notions of knowledge and virtue: what could I expect, but that philosophy should teach you to crawl into a prison; or poetry, to fly into one!—Well, I'll shew you the world! where you will see that riches are the only titles to respect; and that learning is not the way to get riches. There are men who can draw for the sum of a hundred thousand pounds who can hardly spell it.

Y. Ped. Sir, you were pleas'd to send for me to town in an impetuous manner. Two days have pass'd since my arrival. I wou'd therefore importune you to declare to me the reasons of your message.

Sir Av. That is my intention, and you will find by it how nicely I calculate. You know my losses in the South-Sea had sunk my fortune to so low an ebb, that from having been offered, ay, and courted, to accept a wife of quality (my present lady) I fell so low, to have my proposals of marriage between you and the daughter of a certain citizen, rejected; though her fortune was not equal to that of my wife. For I must tell you that a thousand a year is all you can expect from me, who might have left you ten.

Y. Ped. And is to me as desirable a gift.

Sir Av. I am sorry to hear you have no better principles. But I have hit on a way to double that sum. In short, I intend to marry you to your cousin Bellaria. I observed her, the night of your arrival, at supper, look much at you, though you were then rough, and just off your journey: my brother sent her hither to prevent her marrying a gentleman in the country of a small fortune. Now I'll take care you shall have sufficient opportunities together: and I question not but to compass the affair;

by which I gain just ten thousand pound clear, for her fortune is twenty.

Y. Ped. Sir, I desire to deliver my reasons opponent to this match; they are two: first, to the thing, matrimony. Secondly, to the person, who is my cousin-german.

Sir Av. Now, Sir, I desire to deliver mine. I have but one, and that is very short. If you refuse, I'll disinherit you.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Sir, here's a gentleman, who calls himself Wilding, at the door.

Sir Av. Shew him in. Son, you will consider of what I have told you.

Y. Ped. Yes, I will consider, but shall never find a reply to so substantial, prevalent, and convincing an argument.

SCENE IV.

To them SIR HARRY WILDING.

Sir Har. Is not your name, Sir, Sir Avarice Pedant?

Sir Av. At your service, Sir.

Sir Har. Then, Sir, I am your very humble servant.

Sir Av. I don't know you, Sir.

Sir Har. Don't you, Sir! why, then, 'tis probable, by reading this letter, you will know more than you do now.

Sir Av. [Reads.]

'DEAR BROTHER,

'The bearer is my very good friend, Sir Harry Wild-
'ing; he comes to town to introduce his eldest son to

'Bellaria. The young man, I'm told, has a great cha-
'racter for sobriety, and I know his fortune equal to my
'demands. I fear her old lover will find her out, unless
'prevented by an immediate match. Get every thing
'ready as quick as possible: I will be in town soon; 'till
'when, be particularly civil to Sir Harry and his son.
[*Aside.* Ay, with a pox to them!]

'Your humble servant,

'and affectionate brother,

'GEO. PEDANT.'

[*To Sir* Harry.] Sir, your very humble servant. My brother here informs me of your proposals; I presume, Sir, I know your son.

Sir Har. I am surpris'd at that, Sir, for he has no acquaintance but with books. Alas, Sir, he studies day and night!

Sir Av. May I ask what he studies, Sir?

Sir Har. Law, Sir; he has followed it so close these six years, that he has hardly had time to write even—to me (unless when he wants necessaries). But I cannot convince you better than by one of his bills—let me see —ay, here—here it is!—here's a bill—I shall see the rogue a judge—This bill, Sir, is only for one quarter.

For law-books, 50*l.*

Fifty pounds worth of law-books read in one quarter of a year.—I shall see the rogue a judge.

Item. For paper, pens, ink, sand, pencils, penknives, 10*l.*

For fire and candles, 8*l.*

You see, he reads all night.

Paid a woman to brush books, 1*l.*

For places in Westminster-hall, 5*l.*

For coaches thither, at 4*s.* per time, 12*l.*

For night-gown, slippers, caps, physic——

Sir Av. Hold, hold, pray; it is enough in conscience.

Sir Har. In short, the whole bill amounts to two hundred and seventy-five pounds, for the necessaries of study only. I shall see the rogue a judge.

Sir Av. But (methinks) there is one article a little extraordinary: how comes it that your son pays four shillings for a coach to Westminster, when four lawyers go thither for one?

Sir Har. Ay! why that's a question, now, that has been asked me several times: heart! I believe you are all envious of my boy. If he pays four times as much, he carries four times as much law, and that, I think is an answer.

Sir Av. I wonder, Sir Harry, a gentleman of your plentiful fortune should breed your eldest son to the law.

Sir Har. Oh, Sir! I'll give you a very good reason for that——My father was a lawyer, and he got an estate. It was my misfortune to be bred a gentleman. My father kept me in the country 'till I was three and twenty, and my wife has kept me there ever since; for, except when I brought my son to the Temple, and this present journey, I never was twenty miles from home.

Sir Av. It was your misfortune to be bred a gentleman, Sir Harry!

Sir Har. Ay, Sir; but I always resolved to breed my son to the law; I determin'd it before he was born; and I don't question but to see him a judge.—I am impatient 'till I find him out; so I am your humble servant. You may expect me at dinner.

Sir Av. That's kind, however.——You see, son, we have but a short time to execute our project in; and if we are not expeditious, the stock will be sold to another purchaser. I am obliged to go into the city on business: after dinner I will introduce you to my niece. In the mean time, think on some fine speeches, some high com-

pliments: for in dealing with women (contrary to all other merchandize) the way to get them cheap is to cry them up as much beyond their value as possible.

Y. Ped. So the matter is reduced to this, 'Either to be 'married or disinherited.' I'll accept the prior; for, if I am disinherited, I shall never get my estate again; but, if I am married (providentially) I may get rid of my wife.

SCENE V. *St. James's Park.*

VALENTINE *and* VEROMIL.

Val. This was an agreeable surprise, indeed! for of all men, my Veromil is he whom I most wished, but least expected to meet.

Ver. My wishes, Valentine, were equal to yours, but my expectations greater; for I was told the town, and all its pleasures, had long engrossed the heart of my Valentine. Nor has my information been false, I find. These clothes! these looks! these airs! give me reason to wonder how I recollected my metamorphosed friend.

Val. Why, faith! I am a little changed since those happy times, when, after a day spent in study, we us'd to regale at night, and communicate our discoveries in knowledge over a pint of bad port. While, poor creatures! we were strangers to the greatest, pleasantest part of knowledge——

Ver. What?

Val. Woman, dear Charles, woman; a sort of books prohibited at the university, because your grave dons don't understand them. But what part of the world has possessed you these years?

Ver. The first twelvemonth after I left the university, I remained in the country with my father (you had not

then forgot to correspond with me). I then made the tour of France and Italy. I intended to visit Germany; but on my return to Paris, I there received the news of my father's death!

Val. 'Sdeath! he did not deserve the name!—Nay, I am no stranger to your misfortunes. Sure Nature was as blind when she gave him such a son, as Fortune when she robbed you of your birthright.

Ver. Valentine, I charge thee, on thy friendship, not to reflect on that memory which shall be ever sacred to my breast. Who knows what arts my brother may have used? Nay, I have reason to believe my actions abroad were misrepresented. I must have fallen by a double deceit. He must have coloured my innocence with the face of vice, and cover'd his own notorious vices under the appearance of innocence.

Val. Hell in its own shape reward him for it.

Ver. Heaven forgive him. I hope I can.

Val. But tell me, (tho' I dread to ask) he did not, could not, disinherit you of all?

Ver. All in his power. My mother's fortune fell to me, he could not hinder it. And, oh! my friend! I could with that small competency outvie my brother's happiness, had I not, with my fortune, lost a jewel dear to me as my soul—yet here I forget even that. To hold, to embrace so dear a friend, effaces every care.

Val. I still have been your debtor: 'tis your superior genius to oblige; my utmost efforts will be still your due.

Ver. Let us then sacrifice this day to mirth and joy.

Val. With all my heart.

Ver. Is not that Wilding just come into the Mall?

Val. I am sure he is alter'd since you saw him. I wonder his dress, indeed, did not prevent your knowing him.

Ver. No; it is by his dress I do know him, for I saw him in the very same at Paris. He remembers me too, I perceive. Mr. Wilding, your humble servant.

SCENE VI.

WILDING, VEROMIL, VALENTINE.

Wild. Ha! my dear Veromil, a thousand welcomes to England. When left you that delicious place, Paris?

Ver. Soon after you left it.

Wild. I thought you intended for Vienna. But I am glad that we enjoy you so much sooner. For I suppose you are now come to town for good?

Val. Nay, he shall not escape us again.

Ver. My inclinations would bid me spend my whole life with my Valentine; but necessity confines our happiness to this day.

Val. This day!

Ver. To-morrow night I am to meet a friend at Dover, to embark for France. I am glad we meet so soon; for every hour I am with you, though it seems a moment, is worth an age.

Wild. You are soon weary of your country, Mr. Veromil, which you long'd to see so much when we were at Paris.

Ver. Misfortunes have made it disagreeable.

Wild. Come, come, I see the bottom of this; there is a mistress in the case.

Val. To France for a mistress!

Wild. Ay, or what do all our fine gentlemen there?

Val. Learn to please an English one. It wou'd be more rational in a Frenchman to come abroad for a

dancing-master, than in an Englishman to go abroad for a mistress.

Ver. However, you'll allow a lover to be partial; you must excuse me if I think France has now the finest woman in the universe. But, to end your amazement, she is our country-woman.

Wild. And has some devilish coquet led you a dance to Paris? Never stir after her: if she does not return within ten weeks, I'll be bound to —— fetch her.

Val. Who can this great uncelebrated beauty be?

Ver. Oh! Valentine! she is one, whose charms would delude stoicism into love! the luscious dreams of amorous boys ne'er rais'd ideas of so fine a form, nor man of sense e'er wished a virtue in his mistress's mind which she has not. That modesty! that sweetness! that virtue!

Wild. Her name, her name?

Val. Her fortune, her fortune?

Ver. I know, gentlemen, you who have liv'd so much in the gay world will be surprised to hear me talk so seriously on this affair. But, be assured, my whole happiness is in the breast of one woman.

Wild. I own myself surprized; but our friend here can hardly be so, for he is to-morrow to be happy with one woman.

Ver. How!

Val. Wilt thou never have done with it? A man can't appear in public after it's known that he is to be married, but every one who wants a wife will rally him out of envy.

Wild. Ay,——and every one who has a wife out of pity.

Val. 'Sdeath! I'll be married to-morrow, and away into the country the next morning.

Wild. Oh! the country is vastly pleasant during the honey-moon; groves and mountains give one charming

ideas in the spring of matrimony. I suppose we shall have you in town again in the winter; at least you'll be so obliging to send your wife up. A husband would be as public-spirited a man, if he did not run away with his wife, as he who buys a fine picture, and hangs it up in his house for the benefit of all comers. But robbing the public of a fine woman is barbarous; and he, who buries his wife, is as great a miser as he who buries his gold.

Ver. The public may thank themselves; for no man would do either, had not the world affixed shame to the sounds of poverty and cuckoldom.

Val. You mention the name as if there was something frightful in it: one would imagine you had lived in the first age and infancy of cuckoldom. Custom alters every thing. A pair of horns (perhaps) once seemed as odd an ornament for the head as a periwig: but now they are both equally in fashion, and a man is no more star'd at for the one than for the other.

Wild. Nay, I rather think cuckoldom is an honour. I wish every cuckold had a statue before his door, erected at the public expense.

Val. Then the city of London would have as many statues in it as the city of Rome had.

Wild. The ladies are oblig'd to you for your opinion.

Val. I think so. What's yours, pray?

Wild. Mine! that the poets ought to be hanged for every compliment they have made them.

Ver. Hey day!

Wild. For that they have not said enough in their favour———Ah! Charles! there are women in the world—— [*Hugs* Veromil.

Ver. Bravo! women!

Wild. Dost thou think I confine my narrow thoughts to one woman? No; my heart is already in the pos-

session of five hundred, and there is enough for five hundred more.

Val. Why, thou hast more women in thy heart than the Grand Turk has in his seraglio.

Wild. Ay, and if I have not finer women—— 'Sdeath! well recollected. Valentine, I must wait on one of your aunts to an auction this morning.

Ver. Nay, dear honest reprobate, let us dine together.

Wild. I am engaged at the same place.

Val. Veromil, if you please, I'll introduce you. Perhaps you will be entertained with as merry a mixture of characters as you have seen. There is (to give you a short Dramatis Personæ) my worthy uncle, whose whole life and conversation runs on the one topic, Gain. His son, whom I believe you remember at the university, who is since, with much labour and without any genius, improved to be a learned blockhead.

Ver. I guess his perfections by the dawnings I observ'd in him. His learning adorns his genius as the colouring of a great painter would the features of a bad one.

Wild. Or the colouring of some ladies do the wrinkles of their faces.

Val. Then I have two aunts as opposite in their inclinations, as two opposite points of the globe; and I believe as warm in them as the centre.

Wild. And point to the same centre too, or I'm mistaken.

Val. Lastly, two young ladies, one of whom is as romantically in love as yourself, and whom, perhaps, when you have seen, you will not allow the finest woman in the world to be in France.

Ver. I defy the danger. Besides, I desire we may have the afternoon to ourselves. I declare against all cards and parties whatsoever.

Val. I'll second your resistance; for I know we shall be ask'd; and they will be as difficultly refus'd too as a starving author, who begs your subscription to his next miscellany; and you will get much the same by both compliances, a great deal of nonsense and impertinence for your money—for he, who plays at quadrille without being let into the secret, as surely loses, as he would at Newmarket.

Wild. Ay, but then he is let sometimes into much more charming secrets.

Val. Faith! very rarely!—Many have succeeded by the contrary practice, which is the reason why sharpers have been so often happy in their favours. Your success would be more forwarded by winning five hundred than by losing five thousand.

Wild. Why, faith! on a second consideration, I begin to be of your opinion—

For gratitude may to some women fall,
But money, powerful money, charms them all.

ACT II. SCENE I.

SCENE, WILDING'S *Chambers in the Temple.*

PINCET *alone.*

'Tis a fine thing to have a clear conscience: but a clear purse, and a loaded conscience, is the devil. To have been a rogue, in order to be a gentleman, and then reduced to be a servant again!——What, refuse paying my annuity the second half year, and bid discover if I

dare! [*Shews a letter.*]——Discover if I dare! you shall repent that, my dear brother rogue: for, since I can't live like a gentleman by my roguery, I'll e'en tell the truth, and stand in the pillory, like one, by my honesty. [*Knocking.*] So, the duns begin: well, I can say truly my master is not at home now—but, if he were, it would be the same thing. [*Knocking harder.*

SCENE II.

SIR HARRY WILDING, PINCET.

Pin. Hey day! this is some scrivener, or dun of authority.

Sir Har. Here, you, sirrah, where's your master?

Pin. I do not know, Sir.

Sir Har. What, is not he at home?

Pin. No, Sir.

Sir Har. And when do you expect him home?

Pin. I can't tell.

Sir Har. I warrant, gone to Westminster—A diligent rogue—when did your master go out?

Pin. I don't know.—(What strange fellow is this?)

Sir Har. [*Aside.*] I warrant before this rascal was up. —Come, sirrah, show me your master's library.

Pin. His library, Sir?

Sir Har. His library, Sir, his study, his books.

Pin. My master has no books, Sir.

Sir Har. Show me his books, or I'll crack your skull for you, Sir.

Pin. Sir, he has no books. What would you have with my master, Sir?

Sir Har. What's this? [*Taking a book up.*] Rochester's poems? What does he do with poems?—but 'tis better to spend an hour so, than in a tavern.—What

book is this?—Plays——what, does he read plays too?—Hark ye, sirrah, show me where your master keeps his law-books?

Pin. Sir, he has no law-books: what should he do with law-books?

Sir Har. I'll tell you, villain!

Goes to strike him. [*Knocking.*

O here, here he comes, I'll meet my dear boy.

SCENE III.

To them TAYLOR.

Tayl. Mr. Pincet, is your master within? I have brought my bill.

Pin. You must come another time.

Tayl. Another time! Sir, I must speak with him now. I have been put off this twelvemonth, I can stay no longer.

Sir Har. Give me your bill.

Tayl. Will you pay it, Sir?

Sir Har. Perhaps I will, Sir.

Tayl. Here it is, Sir.

Sir Har. Agad! it's a good long one. 'For a suit 'of lac'd clothes made your honour last Michaelmas was 'two years, forty pounds'——What, do your Templars wear lac'd clothes?

Tayl. Do they? ha, ha, ha! wou'd they paid for them too. We have gentlemen here, Sir, who dress as finely as any beaus of them all.

Pin. And pay as finely too, I believe, to your sorrow. [*Aside.*

Sir Harry. 'A suit of black velvet, twenty-three 'pounds.' Adad, the rogue is extravagant.

SCENE IV.

To them MILLINER, PERIWIGMAKER, SHOEMAKER, HOSIER.

Mill. Mr. Pincet, is your master within?

Pin. No, no, no.—You must all come another time.

Per. Sir, we shall not come another time; we agreed to come all in a body; and, unless we are paid, we shall take other methods. [*Knocking.*

Sir Harry. Hell and the devil! what have we here? [*Staring as in the greatest confusion.*

Pin. [*Without.*] He is not at home.

Tricksy. I tell you he is, and I will see him.

SCENE V.

To them MRS. TRICKSY. *As she is crossing the stage,* SIR HARRY *takes hold on her.*

Sir Har. Hark ye, Madam, are you acquainted with my son?

Tric. Nor none of the scrubs that belong to you, fellow, I hope.

Sir Har. The gentleman who owns these chambers, Madam, is my son.

Tric. Sir, you are an impudent coxcomb; the gentleman who owns these chambers has no such dirty relations:

Sir Har. Very fine, very fine! I see it now. My son is an extravagant rake, and I am imposed upon. But I'll be reveng'd on these fop-makers at least.

Per. Sir, I will have my money.

Sir Har. I'll pay you, Sir, with a vengeance—Dogs! villains! whores! [*Beats them out and returns.*

SCENE VI.

SIR HARRY *alone.*

A rogue! a rogue! is this his studying law?—Oh! here's his strong box, we'll see what's in thee however. [*Breaks it open.*]——What's this? [*Reads.*

'DEAR BUNNY,

'I will meet you in the balcony at the Old Playhouse 'this evening at six. Dumps is gone into the country. 'I chuse rather to see you abroad than at my own house; 'for some things lately happen'd, I fear, have given the 'cuckold reason for suspicion. Nothing can equal my 'contempt for him, but my love for you.

'Your's, affectionately,

'J. G.'

Oh! the devil! the devil!—Law!—ay, ay, he has studied law with a vengeance. I shall have him suffer the law, instead of practising it. I'll demolish your fopperies for you, rascal.——Dear Bunny, [*Looks on the letter.*] I shall see the rogue hanged.

SCENE VII.

SCENE, *an Anti-chamber in* SIR AVARICE PEDANT'S *House.*

LADY LUCY, LADY GRAVELY, BELLARIA, CLARISSA.

L. Lucy. Ha, ha, ha!——And have you the assurance to own yourself in love, in an age, when 'tis as immodest to love before marriage, as 'tis unfashionable to love after it?

Bel. And when the merit of him I do love is much

more a rarity than either. 'Tis only when we fix our affections unworthily that they are blameable; but, where virtue, sense, reputation, worth, love, and constancy meet in a man, the mistress who is asham'd of her passion must have a soul too mean to distinguish them.

L. Gra. What will the immodesty of this age come to?

L. Lucy. What will the stupidity of it come to?

L. Gra. A young woman to declare openly she loves a man!

L. Lucy. A young woman to declare openly she loves one man only? Your wit and beauty, Bellaria, were intended to inslave mankind. Your eyes should first conquer the world, and then weep, like Alexander's, for more worlds to conquer.

Bel. I rather think he should have wept for those he had conquered. He had no more title to sacrifice the lives of men to his ambition than a woman has their ease. And I assure you, Madam, had my eyes that power to speak, I would only defend my own by them, which is the only warrantable use of power in both sexes.

L. Lucy. Well, for a woman who has seen so much of the world, you talk very strangely.

L. Gra. It is to her town education, to her seeing the world, as you call it, that she owes these immodest thoughts; had her father confin'd her in the country, as her uncle did, and as I advis'd him, she would have scorn'd fellows as much as I do.

Bel. I hope, Madam, I shall never give any of my friends reason to regret my education.

L. Gra. Yes, Madam, I do regret it;—I am sorry I have a relation who has no more virtue than to love a man.

Bel. My father commanded me, Madam, to love him.

L. Gra. Yes, but your uncle has commanded you not.

Bel. It is not in my power to obey him, nor am I obliged to it. I defy you to say I ever gave encouragement to any other: or to him, before I had my father's leave, his command. He introduced him to me, and bid me think of him as my husband. I obey'd with difficulty, 'till I discovered such worth, such virtues in his soul, that the reception which I at first gave him out of duty, I afterwards gave him out of love. I plac'd the dear image in my heart; and you or all the world, shall never tear it thence, or plant another's there.

L. Gra. Did you ever hear such a wretch? I could almost cry to hear her.

L. Lucy. I can't help laughing at her; ha, ha, ha!

L. Gra. Madam! Madam! more gravity would become you.

L. Lucy. More gaiety would become you, dear niece.

Bel. I find, aunts, it's impossible to please you both, and I'm afraid it will be difficult for me to please either; for indeed, Lady Gravely, I shall never come up to your gravity: nor, I believe, Lady Lucy, to your gaiety.

L. Lucy. Dear creature! you will alter your opinion, when you have liberty to go to plays and assemblies.

L. Gra. Plays! and assemblies! send her to church.

Bel. I dare venture to both——I shall never reach that sublime way of thinking, which imputes dulness to that, or levity to this. And if you will give me leave to be free, I think Lady Gravely may go more to the one, and Lady Lucy ought to go more to the other.

SCENE VIII.

To them SERVANT.

Serv. Ladies, Mr. Valentine, Mr. Wilding, and another gentleman are below.

L. Lucy. Shew them up.

L. Gra. I'll not be seen.

L. Lucy. Nay, Lady Gravely.

L. Gra. I don't like such company——besides, I have some business in my chamber.

SCENE IX.

VALENTINE, WILDING, VEROMIL, LADY LUCY, BELLARIA, CLARISSA.

Val. Ladies, your humble servant, I beg the honour of introducing a friend of mine—Lady Lucy, Mrs. Bellaria. [*They salute.*

Bel. Oh, heav'ns! [*Aside.*

L. Lucy. Was there much company in the Park?

Wild. All the world, but yourselves; I wonder you could resist the temptation of so fine a day, Lady Lucy.

L. Lucy. Oh! never be surprised at me, but when you see me walking; for I am the most lazy creature in the world. I would not have walk'd to my coach this morning to have been empress of the universe. Oh! I adore the eastern way of travelling on men's shoulders: but walking is so vulgar an exercise, I wonder people of quality give in to it.

Val. It has only the recommendation of being wholesome and innocent.

L. Lucy. Great recommendations, truly, to some antiquated prude, some poor-spirited animal, who is proud of an innocent face.

Wild. That is a face which never does the beholders any harm.

L. Lucy. Unless it frightens them—ha, ha, ha!

Wild. Some women are innocent from their want of beauty, as some men are from their want of courage.

L. Lucy. True. We should all be tyrants if we had power.

Wild. You will be too late for the auction, Lady Lucy.

L. Lucy. The other lady has disappointed us, so I shall not go. But I have bought a picture since I saw you, which if you don't admire as much as I do, I shall not admire your judgment.

Wild. If I do not admire it, I'll say I do, and that's the same thing.

SCENE X.

VALENTINE, CLARISSA, VEROMIL, BELLARIA.

Val. You look very ill to-day, Clarissa.

Cla. You were not obliged to tell me so, methinks.

Val. Freedom in a husband, is—

Cla. Impertinence——stay till you have the title.

Val. A day will give it me.

Cla. Perhaps not. This troublesome impertinent freedom makes me believe you not so near your happiness.

Val. Madam! Madam! this turbulency of temper makes me fear I am far too near my misery.

Cla. I don't understand you.

Val. I fear you are more difficult to be understood

than I am.—Stay till I have a title—He who marries a woman, or pays for an estate, before he is apprized of their real value, will find it then too late to lament. The purchaser, indeed, may sell his estate to another with loss; but the husband, like a loaded ass, must drag on the heavy burthen, till death alone relieves him.

Cla. Intolerable insolence!——I'll never see you more.

Val. Pardon me, Bellaria, I must follow her.—To make the quarrel irreconcileable. [*Aside.*

SCENE XI.

VEROMIL, BELLARIA.

[VEROMIL *and* BELLARIA, *who had stood this while silent, rush into one another's arms.*]

Ver. My Bellaria!

Bel. Are you——can you be my Veromil?

Ver. Let this fond kiss confirm me to be Veromil, and yours.

Bel. And this embrace, which pulls you to my heart, assures you that I know I hold my Veromil: for none but him these arms should e'er encircle.

Ver. My dear, my tender love!

Bel. Oh! tell me what strange, what unexpected chance has brought us once again together.

Ver. A chance so strange; it seems the direction of a providence, which looks with a propitious pleasure on the sincerity of our virtuous loves; for had not the accidental meeting of a friend prevented it, I had to-morrow gone for France, whither I falsely heard you was sent.

Bel. Did you never receive any letter from me?

Ver. And did not my Bellaria then forget me?—Oh! how blest had I been to have seen a line from her.

Bel. Then I have been betrayed; for know, my Veromil, I was forc'd from my uncle's house in the middle of the night, and in two days brought hither; where I have been kept the closest prisoner; yet I found means to write to you, and gave the letter to my maid, with a ring from my finger to enforce her faithfulness; and she has a thousand times sworn she sent it you.

Ver. O the false jade!

Bel. Heav'n knows what different agonies I have felt! sometimes I thought you dead.—Nay, once I fear'd you false.

Ver. Oh, my Paradise! no worlds could have tempted me; for, by this sweetest, dearest hand, I swear there's not an atom in that charming form, which I would change for worlds.

Bel. You know how willingly I believe you.—But hark, if we are overseen, we are ruined.

Ver. Tell me—O tell me, what I shall do.

Bel. I'll think of it.—Is Valentine your friend?

Ver. Most nearly.

Bel. Then consult with him, if you believe it safe.

Ver. Oh, Bellaria! } [*Looking fondly on one*
Bel. Farewell—My heart. } *another.*

Ver. Eternal transports, agonies of joy delight thy soul. Excellent, charming creature!—But ah! a sudden damp chills all my rising joys; for oh! what dragons must be overcome, before I gather that delicious fruit!—I must impart it to Valentine; for on his friendship hangs my sure success.

SCENE XII.

VALENTINE, VEROMIL.

Val. Alone, and musing, dear Veromil! Are you thinking on your lady in France?

Ver. Valentine!—are you my friend?

Val. If you doubt it, I am not.

Ver. It is in your power, perhaps, to grant me my utmost wish—will you?

Val. You know I will.

Ver. Be it whatever—

Val. Humph!—Faith! unless it should be to go abroad with you to-morrow, for the same reason keeps me at home that sends you away—a woman; and I believe, now you have seen her, you will confess a fine one.

Ver. What do you mean?

Val. In a word, that lady I left you alone with I doat on to distraction.—You seem disturbed, Veromil! Did I not know you already engag'd, and the constancy of your temper, her charms might excuse my suspecting a sudden conquest.

Ver. Be assur'd it is not in the power of wealth or beauty to change my passion.—And are you to be married to her to-morrow?

Val. Wou'd I were. To shew you I distrust not your friendship, I'll open my whole breast to you. I had for almost two years pursued that other lady, and, after a long series of importunity, at last obtained her consent, and to-morrow was the appointed day. But, about a month since, the lady whom I told you of in our way from the Park came hither; that I lik'd her you'll easily

believe; but by frequent conversation the disease possess'd my whole mind. My love for her, and aversion for my former mistress, increased daily—till I resolv'd to break with the old, and pursue the new passion. The one I have accomplish'd in an irreconcileable quarrel with Clarissa: the first step I will take to the latter shall be, by all means whatsoever, to lessen her value for him she thinks herself engag'd to—whom, cou'd I once remove, I easily should supply his place.

Ver. But can you do this with honour?

Val. Ha, ha, ha! you and I had strange notions of that word when we us'd to read the moralists at Oxford; but our honour here is as different from that as our dress. In short, it forbids us to receive injuries, but not to do them.

Ver. Fine honour truly!——Just the reverse of Christianity.

Val. Pshaw!——thou art so unfashionably virtuous!

Ver. Virtue may indeed be unfashionable in this age; for ignorance and vice will always live together. And sure the world is come to that height of folly and ignorance, posterity may call this the Leaden Age. But virtue loses not its worth by being slighted by the world, more than the pearl, when the foolish cock preferr'd a barley-corn. Virtue is a diamond, which when the world despises, 'tis plain that knaves and fools have too much sway therein.

Val. Ay, virtue and diamonds may be very like one another——but, faith! they are seldom the ornaments of the same person.

Ver. I am sorry for it.

Val. Well, now tell me in what I can serve you?

Ver. I must first persuade you into other thoughts: but I hear company. If you please, we'll walk in the garden.

SCENE XIII.

LADY GRAVELY, *following* SIR AVARICE.

L. Gra. I tell you it's in every one's mouth—the whole world says it.

Sir Av. Well, and what do I lose by that? Would you have me part with my wife, because the world is pleas'd to belie her? I'll as soon sell out of the stocks the next report that is raised about Gibraltar.

L. Gra. Insensible wretch!

Sir Av. Insensible! you are mistaken; I have computed it, and I find it cheaper to maintain my wife at home, than to allow her a separate maintenance. She has great relations, and will consequently have a great allowance.

L. Gra. Abandon'd! would you keep a serpent in your bosom?

Sir Av. If she is a serpent, it's more than I know. If you can prove any thing against her, do.

L. Gra. Will you prosecute it, if I do?

Sir Av. If her gallant be rich: but if he's poor, look you, I will have nothing to do with him; for I have resolved never to go to law with a beggar or a lord: the one you will never cast, and the other you will get nothing by casting.

L. Gra. You'll get revenge.

Sir Av. I am too good a Christian to give money for revenge.

L. Gra. But not to give up your conscience for money. Will you set up for a Christian without honesty?

Sir Av. I'll have faith at least; and so, sister, I believe my wife honest, and will believe it 'till you prove the contrary.

L. Gra. Can a woman be honest who frequents assemblies, auctions, plays, and reads romances?

Sir Av. Very innocently, I dare swear.

L. Gra. Who keeps an assembly herself! whose house is a public rendezvous for idle young fellows! and who is, I am afraid, sometimes alone with one fellow.

Sir Av. And very innocently, I dare aver.

L. Gra. How! innocently alone with a fellow! Brother, I would not be innocently alone with a fellow for the universe.

Sir Av. Since you enrage me, you yourself have a worse character than my wife.

L. Gra. Monster! I an ill character! I, who have lived reputably with two husbands!

Sir Av. And buried them both with great satisfaction.

L. Gra. The world knows how decently I grieved for them both; yes, you see too well I have not worn off the loss of the last to this day.

Sir Av. Nor will not, 'till you have got a third, which I heartily wish you had, that my house might be at ease, and that my poor wife, my poor Penelope, might not be disturb'd. For I will no more believe any thing against her than I will believe a stock-jobber on the Exchange, or a lawyer in Westminster-hall.

L. Gra. The curses of cuckoldom and credulity attend you, till thy horns put out those eyes which cannot see them.

SCENE XIV.

WILDING *and* LADY GRAVELY.

Wild. So, now must I transform myself into a shape as foreign to my natural one as ever Proteus did. [*Aside.*] —Hem! hem!—Lady Gravely, your humble servant!

L. Gra. How got you admittance here, Sir? I thought you knew that I receive no visits from men at this hour!

Wild. As my visits, Madam, are always innocent, I presumed your ladyship might admit me at a time when you deny access to the looser of our sex. I am, indeed, unfortunately, of that part of the species which your ladyship disesteems; but sobriety, I know, recommends even a man to your ladyship's favour.

L. Gra. Sobriety! you have, indeed, a great title to sobriety, Sir.

Wild. I own, indeed, the former part of my life has been too freely spent; but love has made me a convert. Love, which has made the sober often gay, has made me sober.

L. Gra. I am glad a good effect can proceed from a bad cause. Who can she be who has wrought this miracle.

Wild. Wou'd I durst tell you!

L. Gra. What do you fear?

Wild. Your anger.

L. Gra. Tho' I disapprove of love——if virtuous, I could forgive it.

Wild. Then 'tis yourself, yourself, Madam; the object of my thoughts, my dreams, my wishes—

L. Gra. In love with me! I hope, Sir, my conduct has not given encouragement.

Wild. Oh! do not, do not look thus cruel on me. Those eyes shou'd only dart their lightnings on the profligate; but when approach'd with purity, should be all gentle, mild, propitious. I, Madam, despise and hate the world as you. Coquets are my aversion.

L. Gra. That, indeed, shews your sense.

Wild. Would but my fate so far bless me, that I might have the opportunity of conversing with a woman of your sense, of communicating my censures on the world

to you, and approving yours. Nothing can be harmful that passes between such a pair. [*Kissing her hand.*] Let what will proceed from their amours.

L. Gra. Odious name!

Wild. Their virtuous hours. [*Kissing it harder.*] The world never lays any censure on their conduct.

L. Gra. The world is not half so censorious as it ought to be on the flirting part of the sex.—Really, I know very few who are not downright naughty.

Wild. Yes, and openly—it is six times the crime. The manner of doing ill, like the manner of doing well, is chiefly consider'd—and then the persons too.

L. Gra. The giggling, ogling, silly, vile creatures.

Wild. I don't know a woman, beside yourself, one can converse with.

L. Gra. Truly, I am at a loss for conversation among my sex.

Wild. Ah! Madam, might one who has the misfortune to be a man—

L. Gra. Don't call it a misfortune, since the women are so bad.

Wild. Can I hope?

L. Gra. 'Tis to the men, too, we are obliged for knowing what women are; if they were secret, all women would pass for virtuous.

Wild. Yet I abhor want of secresy. Had I been admitted to familiarities, I would have sooner died than discover'd them.

L. Gra. I cannot deny, indeed, but that secresy is a manly virtue.

Wild. Oh! it is the characteristic of a man.

L. Gra. I am glad to see a young man of such charming principles.

Wild. Oh, Madam!

L. Gra. Such a just and bad notion of the world.

Wild. Madam! Madam!

L. Gra. Such a thorough, thorough hatred of bad women.

Wild. Dear Madam!

L. Gra. And at the same time such a perfect, tender, manly concern for the reputation of all women.

Wild. Oh! eternally careful, Madam!

L. Gra. And to shew you my approbation, I will venture to walk with you in the garden till dinner.—I will but speak to a servant and follow you. [*Exit.*

Wild. Soh! by what I can see, Lady Lucy, you are in a fair way to repent sending me of this errand. Make diversion for you! I shall make diversion for myself, I believe; for nothing but the devil can prevent my success, and I'm sure it's not his business to prevent it.

ACT III. SCENE I.

SCENE, *the Anti-chamber.*

LADY LUCY *and* WILDING.

LADY LUCY.

I HAVE been half dead with impatience to know your success.

Wild. If ever I am sent on such an errand again—

L. Lucy. I'll engage she gave it you home.

Wild. That she did, indeed.

L. Lucy. And—and—Ha, ha, ha!—How did she receive you?—Ha, ha, ha!

Wild. Why, I attacked her in a grave solemn style

I put on as hypocritical a countenance as a jesuit at a confession.

L. Lucy. And she received you like a nun, I suppose.

Wild. Sir (says she), while you frequent my sister's assemblies, your affected sobriety will gain no place in my belief. I receive no visits from any man——but from such a gay, wild, loose, raking, dancing, singing, fluttering——

L. Lucy. Coxcomb! Ha, ha, ha!

Wild. Would you recommend yourself to me, you must leave off your whole set of company, and particularly that wild, vain, thoughtless, flirting, unfix'd, inconstant—

L. Lucy. Hold! hold!

Wild. Mimicking, sighing, laughing——

L. Lucy. Whom do you mean?

Wild. She nam'd nobody.

L. Lucy. No, she did not need. I know whom she scandaliz'd, and I'll tell her, be it only to make mischief.

Wild. I say she nam'd nobody at first; but when she found I did not know the picture by her colours, she writ your name at the bottom.

L. Lucy. My name!

Wild. 'Tis too true.

L. Lucy. The devil take you for telling me of it; it has discompos'd me so—I find it impossible to have any complexion to-day.

Wild. You need none, you have done mischief enough already; 'tis time to think of repairing some of it.

L. Lucy. But I will not repair any mischief I have done.

Wild. That's an affectation: you are better natur'd.

L. Lucy. Indeed, I am as cruel as Caligula. I wish your whole sex had but one pair of eyes, that I might kill them all with a frown.

Wild. And one body, that you might recover them as easily. Come, come, Lady Lucy, I have been your fool long enough, and have had no reward for my pains.

L. Lucy. No reward! Have I not spoke to you in all public places? Have I not read your odious letters? Have I not sung your more odious songs? Have I not suffer'd you to gallant my fan, to kiss my lap-dog? What can a reasonable creature ask, which I have not done?

Wild. The only thing a reasonable creature would ask. You have turn'd the tables on me finely, indeed, and made that my reward which I should have pleaded as my merit. A prince would be finely served truly, who, when his soldiers asked him for a reward, was to tell them the honour of serving him was one.

L. Lucy. I can reckon fifty lovers of mine contented with less.

Wild. Rare lovers! A lady wou'd be as finely serv'd by such lovers as a king by such soldiers—fellows only fit to guard a drawing-room, or to court in it; and of no more use in the real fields of love or war than an eunuch in a bed-chamber, or a parson in a battle.

L. Lucy. I have taken a sudden resolution—

Wild. Have a care of a bad one!

L. Lucy. Never to see you more.

Wild. I thank you for telling me, however, because it has led me into another resolution.

L. Lucy. Impertinent!

Wild. Never to leave you more, till you have given me all the joys in your power.

L. Lucy. I hate you.

Wild. That's barbarous, when you know my love.

L. Lucy. Yes, I do know your love; and therefore I have us'd you like a spaniel, and will use you like a spaniel.

Wild. And I, like a spaniel, will but fawn the more, my angel. [*Takes her in his arms.*

SCENE II.

To them SIR AVARICE PEDANT.

Sir Av. Hoity toity? Hey-day! What's here to do? Have I caught you, gentlefolks? I begin to see I am rightly inform'd. Are these your innocent gaieties, madam?

SCENE III.

To them SIR HARRY WILDING.

Sir Har. Where is the dog? Sirrah! scoundrel! where are you? I shall see you hang'd, rascal! I shall see you hang'd, sirrah! I'll begin the executioner's work. I'll chastise you, sirrah!

Wild. Humph!

Sir Av. Sir Harry! what is the matter.

Sir Har. The matter! Why, Sir, my boy, my lawyer, that I told you of, is ruin'd and undone.

Sir Av. How, pray?——[*Aside*] I'm glad to hear it, however.

Sir Har. How! why, he is a fop, a coxcomb, and I shall see him hang'd.—That's he, Sir, that's the lawyer. ——I'll disinherit you, dog.

Wild. Sir, I hope I have done nothing to deserve such a fate.

Sir Har. Nothing! Is disappointing my hopes nothing? Is being a beau, when I thought you a lawyer, nothing?—I'll disinherit you, sirrah!—you are no son of

mine—you have proved your mother a strumpet, and me a cuckold.

Sir Av. Truly, so he has me too, I'm afraid. [*Aside.*

L. Lucy. Heaven send us safe off. [*Aside.*

Sir Har. You must know, Sir, I came up to town to marry you to this gentleman's niece, a fine young lady with twenty thousand pound—

L. Lucy. Ha! [*Aside.*

Sir Har. But you shall beg, or starve, or steal, it is equal to me. Sir, I cannot but be in a passion; he has injur'd me in the tenderest point.

Sir Av. So he has me, truly.

L. Lucy. And me, I am sure.

Sir Av. In short, I suspect, Sir Harry, that he has been too free with my wife; and he who is too free with one's wife, may, some time or other, rob one's house.

Sir Har. Nay, perhaps he has begun to rob already. It's probable I may see him hang'd before I go out of town.

L. Lucy. He has been too free, indeed? What did you ever see in me, Sir, or in my conduct, which cou'd give you an ill suspicion of me?

Wild. So! I'm in a fine way i'faith. [*Aside.*

Sir Har. I shall see him hang'd.

Sir Av. He deserves it truly.

L. Lucy. What could make you imagine that I was to be brib'd to so mean, base, low an action! what could make you think I'd ever sell my niece?

Sir Av.
Sir Har. } How.

L. Lucy. Sir Avarice, you are a stranger to the arts of this wicked young man; he has importuned me a thousand times, since Bellaria's coming to town, to betray her to him; and just now he vowed never to let me go, till I had promised.——Had you not come in,

Heav'n knows whether I should have ever got away from him.

Wild. Can you blame the effects of love, Madam? You yourself see what a metamorphosis it has caused in me.—I, who for six long years scarce ever liv'd out of a study, who knew no amusement, no diversion but in books, no sooner saw the charming maid, than reading grew my bane; gaiety, dress, every thing that might charm the fair, has since employ'd my thoughts.

Sir Har. What do I hear?

Wild. My father here, who, from not knowing the cause of this transformation, has so severely resented it, can testify the truth of what I say.

Sir Har. I shall see the rogue a judge!——That I can, my dear boy; and will take care that thou shalt not be forc'd to bribe or beg any one: the girl shall be thy own.——Sir Avarice, I ask your pardon; and, Madam, I ask your pardon; and, Harry, I ask your pardon.

Wild. Oh, Sir! you make me blush. Dear witty creature! [*Aside.*

Sir Av. You were not so good as your word, at dinner, Sir Harry.

Sir Har. I was hunting after my boy here; but I will be glad to be recommended to the butler presently.

Sir Av. At your own time.—Come, my dear; Sir Harry may have some privacies for his son: I have something to impart to you too.

SCENE IV.

SIR HARRY WILDING, YOUNG WILDING.

Sir Har. But hark you, young man; what's become of all your law-books, hey?

Wild. Books, Sir; at my chambers, Sir.

Sir Har. Then they are invisible. If I could but have seen as much of them as of my own in the country (I mean the outsides) I should have been satisfied.——And pray, Sir, how came you by this letter?

Wild. Damnation! [*Aside.*

Sir Har. Why don't you answer?

Wild. That letter, Sir!

Sir Har. Yes, Sir, that letter, Sir!

Wild. That letter, Sir!

Sir Har. Yes, Sir.

Wild. I don't know what it is, Sir, I never read it.

Sir Har. You are too great a man to read your own letters, I suppose. You keep a secretary, I hope. I have paid off your secretary, I assure you. But I presume—a—you can read it.——You are not a perfect beau, I hope.

Wild. What shall I do? I am ruin'd and undone. [*Aside.*

Sir Har. Or shall I read it for you? [*reads it.*] I found this in your chamber, Sir; in your strong box. Your effects were all paper, Sir. Are not you a fine gentleman? Oh! Harry! Harry! that ever I shou'd find such a letter as this, directed to——ha! to Capt. Belvil.

Wild. 'Sdeath! how came I not to recollect that sooner? [*Aside.*] To Capt. Belvil!—I see the whole mistake.

Sir Har. What mistake.

Wild. You have been at another gentleman's chambers.

Sir Har. Sir, I was at those chambers where I plac'd you.

Wild. Ah, Sir! there's the mistake. I chang'd them about a fortnight ago; they were so noisy, they discompos'd me in my study. I shou'd have sent you word of it in my next letter.

Sir Har. How? I have committed a fine set of errors, I'm sure.

Wild. What have you done, Sir?

Sir Har. Broke open a few locks, that's all——I may be hanged myself now before I go into the country.

Wild. Forbid it——you have a most litigious man to deal with.

Sir Har. I must make it up in the best manner I can. You must assist me with law. But come, we will lose no time with our heiress. Besides, I long to see your chambers, and your books. I am resolv'd I'll find some time this afternoon. I'll first obey a certain call that I find within me, and then wash my face and hands, and get my wig powdered, that I may be fit to wait on the young lady: so don't be out of the way.

Wild. This is a miraculous escape! or rather a short reprieve; for how to carry on the deceit I don't know. I'll e'en go and advise with trusty Pincet; for I believe he is (as well as several of my brother Templars' servants) a better lawyer than his master.

SCENE V.

SIR AVARICE, LADY LUCY, BELLARIA, YOUNG PEDANT.

Sir Av. Be not angry with me, Bellaria, I get nothing by this match; and when I get nothing by an affair, it is very hard I shou'd be blamed for it.

Bel. I know not whom to be angry with.

L. Lucy. Look-you, Bellaria, I am heartily sorry for your misfortune; because I know nothing so inconvenient as being married to a very gay man. Mr. Wilding may be a diverting lover, but he is not fit for a husband.

Bel. I cannot distinguish between those names, Madam.

L. Lucy. Don't affect the prude, dear Bellaria.—You see yourself reduc'd to a necessity of marrying, and I know but one way in the world to avoid the match proposed——and that too, by Sir Avarice's leave.

Sir Av. Any thing in my power. I confess I do not approve of the young man.

L. Lucy. Then let us leave the lovers together. If you can agree, Bellaria, to prefer a sober young man who loves you, to a wild fellow who values you no more than a thousand others, you may escape what you so much dread.

Sir Av. Well, well, you see my excessive fondness, niece. I sacrifice my reputation to your happiness.

SCENE VI.

BELLARIA, YOUNG PEDANT.

Bel. I am infinitely obliged to your concern for me——
[*A long silence here.*
So, cousin, you hear what my aunt says: you are in love with me, it seems.

Y. Ped. No, truly, I can't profess that I am. Matrimony is a subject I have very little revolved in my thoughts: but obedience to a parent is most undoubtedly due.

Bel. Obedience to a parent, cousin!

Y. Ped. Nay, nay, I shall not require any thing to be given which admits of a dispute—or which (as Mr. Locke very well observes) does not receive our assent as soon as the proposition is known and understood. Let us introduce then this syllogism:

Whatever the law of nature enjoins is indispensably just;
But the law of nature enjoins obedience to a parent.

Ergo, Obedience to a parent is indispensably just.

Bel. Nay, but what have we to do with the law of nature?

Y. Ped. O, if you require farther——the divine law confirms the law of nature. I shall proceed to shew that it is approved by profane writers also; translating them as they occur for your more immediate comprehension.

Bel. I'll leave you to your meditations.

SCENE VII.

YOUNG PEDANT *alone.*

Y. Ped. Venus says to Æneas in Virgil, 'Fear not the 'commands of a parent; nor refuse to obey her precepts.' ——What says Polynices to Jocasta in Euripides?— 'Whatever you will, O my mother, shall also be grateful 'to me.'——The sons of Metellus, as recorded by Alexander, are a great instance——Plautus in Sticho;— 'Whatever our parents command we are obliged to per- 'form.' Why are Cleobis and Biton preferr'd by Solon in Herodotus? why, for their piety to their mother. What an instance have we in the second son of Artaxerxes—

SCENE VIII.

To him VALENTINE, VEROMIL.

Val. So, cousin Pedant, what, arguing with yourself?

Y. Ped. What! is she gone?

Val. Who?

Y. Ped. The lady: Bellaria, I think they call her. The women of this age are profoundly wicked! I was proving to her the necessity of obeying a parent, and she wou'd not stay to hear it.

Val. Oh! you must not entertain ladies with those subjects.

Y. Ped. I shou'd rejoice egregiously not to be obliged to entertain them at all. I have a very hard fate, that I cannot be permitted to pursue my studies, but must be summoned up hither to be married. I have money enough to buy books, and the necessaries of life; why should I marry then?——Because my wife is rich. Why, if it be granted that I have enough, the conclusion will be that I do not want more.

Ver. Here's news for you, Valentine.

Val. The villainy of my uncle gives me more surprise than I have apprehension from his son.

Ver. Surprised at villainy, now-a-days! No, Valentine, be surprised when you see a man honest; when you find that man whom gold will not transform into a knave, I will believe it possible you may find that stone which will change every thing into gold.

SCENE IX.

To them WILDING.

Wild. Wish me joy, wish me joy, my friends!

Ver. We should rather ask the occasion of your joy.

Wild. The usual occasion, marriage—I don't know but I may be married to-morrow——But (perhaps) you'll think, from what I said to-day, I shou'd have rather begg'd your pity than your congratulation.

Ver. Your wife may (perhaps) want that most—But who is she?

Wild. She is——she is——Ha, ha, ha!

Val. One thou art asham'd to name, I believe.

Wild. She is a very great friend of a friend of yours. She is even——Bellaria?

Val. Bellaria?

Ver. Confusion. [*Aside.*

Wild. My father is arrived on that purpose. The matter is agreed with the guardian in the country, who is himself coming to town. This haste (it seems) is lest she shou'd be discover'd by a lover in the country. But you don't wish me joy, methinks.

Val. Because I believe you won't have her.

Wild. Ha, ha, ha! If I have her not: if I don't win her, wed her, love her, and grow weary of her in a month, may I be reduced to that last extremity, to live by the charity of superannuated widows of the town, and either go to bed with an old woman, or without a supper.

Val. A very modest declaration! and may you thrive according to your merits. But I must leave you on some business——Veromil.

SCENE X.

WILDING, YOUNG PEDANT.

Wild. So cold! 'Sdeath! this fellow's in love with matrimony itself, and jealous of any others sharing in it.

Y. Ped. Sir, if I recollect your face, your name is Wilding.

Wild. Ha! Mr. Pedant, your very humble servant.

Y. Ped. I hear, Sir, you are about to consummate with a young lady here. I assure you, none will so sensibly rejoice in your fortune as myself.

Wild. Dear Sir!

Y. Ped. For your preferment will be my deliverance, and the occasion of restoring me to my studies.

Wild. Oh! Sir!

Y. Ped. For books are, in my eye, as much preferable to women, as the Greek language is to the French.

Wild. You say true—and women are as much more difficult to be understood.

Y. Ped. Ay, Sir; and when you have studied them your whole life, you may justly say of them, what a certain philosopher romanced of learning—'That you know nothing at all.'

Wild. It is, no doubt, a very great uneasiness to you to be absent from your books.

Y. Ped. Yet, Sir, do not imagine me totally absent: I have the benefit of a friend's chambers in the Temple, one formerly my chum, now out of town, who has no very bad collection, and condescends to permit me the use of his rooms.

Wild. You just now told me you rejoiced in my fortune.

Y. Ped. I remember.

Wild. It is then in your power to promote it infinitely by lending me your chambers this afternoon.

Y. Ped. Sir, you may depend upon my doing—*quantum* in me, to serve you. How will they be instrumental?

Wild. If you will walk with me I'll tell you, for I hear company.

SCENE XI.

CLARISSA, *followed by* BELLARIA, VALENTINE, *and* VEROMIL.

Clar. Nothing shall prevail with me—I detest his sight; the appearance of ghosts or fiends can bring no greater horror, nor more wou'd I avoid them.

Val. You see, Bellaria, how happy I should have been in a wife.

Bel. This is only affectation; you must not part so. Follow her, Mr. Valentine; she can fly no farther than that chamber. Nay, I vow you shall.—The little quarrels of lovers are only throwing water on the flames, which quells them for a while, then makes them burn the brighter.

Val. But, when you throw on too great a quantity, the flames may be extinguish'd.

Bel. Nay, this is barbarous: you must and shall follow her, and appease her.

Val. Since you command, Madam——It shall be my own fault, if this be not the last visit. [*Aside.*

SCENE XII.

VEROMIL, BELLARIA.

Ver. [*Looking on* Bellaria, *and speaking as to himself.*] Can deceit take root in such a soil?—No. I'll sooner disbelieve my friend—she can't be false; heaven never would have stampt its image on so base a coin. The eyes which have beheld that face will never believe themselves against her—so lively is innocence writ there—can falsehood then——

Bel. What means my love?

Ver. I know not what I mean.

Bel. Nam'd you not falsehood?

Ver. Ha! do you start at that sound? A guilty conscience starts when it is upbraided—the name of a crime has magic in it to the guilty ear.

Bel. I am confounded!

Ver. So am I, Bellaria!

Bel. Oh! tell me what it is that afflicts you. I will relieve your pain.

Ver. Have you the power then of that fabled spear, can you as easily cure as give a wound?

Bel. [*Smiling.*] If I have given you the wound, I will have the charity to cure it.

Ver. Your charity is extensive, Madam; you wou'd do the same to more—to Valentine. But Oh! you cannot wound him as you have wounded me; his heart is better fortified; one of those whom love may make a scar in for a while, which time will soon wear off. You have pierc'd my soul, Bellaria.

Bel. It never felt a pain like that torments me now; tell me, be generous, and tell me all your griefs.

Ver. What can they be? but that Bellaria's false; false with my friend; she triumphs in her falsehood, and bids me make a confidant of my happier rival.

Bel. Do I hear this, and live!

Ver. Wonder rather that I have liv'd to tell it. Live! I do not! my life was wrapp'd in you, in you, my only love, whom youth or beauty, wit or wealth, could never chace away from my bosom; whom, through a tedious three years' absence, amidst the splendour of foreign courts, my constant breast still cherish'd as its guardian angel, for whom I've sighed, I've wept more than becomes a man to boast of.

Bel. I shall not boast what I have done for you; yet this: I would not have accused you without a cause.

Ver. A cause! demonstration is one.

Bel. Demonstration!

Ver. Ay, Madam! the words of such a friend are little less: he told me that you knew of his passion, and had not discourag'd it.

Bel. By all that's virtuous; by all the powers of heav'n, he wrong'd me.

Ver. Whom shall I believe?

Bel. Your friend—a woman's testimony bears no proportion with a man's.

Ver. By heav'n it should not.

Bel. Still maintain the unjust superiority; allow no virtue, no merit to us; make us as you do your slaves. Inconstancy, which damns a woman, is no crime in man. The practis'd libertine who seduces poor, unskilful, thoughtless virgins is applauded, while they must suffer endless infamy and shame. Well have ye reveng'd the sin of Eve upon us: for man has since supplied the serpent's place, and scandalously lurks to cause our ruin: for what but such an infernal spirit cou'd inspire a villain to abuse my innocence to you?

Ver. Cou'd he be such a villain?

Bel. Do believe him, ungrateful as thou art; but oh! remember this, you'll find too late how much you've wrong'd me, and curse that credulous ear which separates us for ever.

[*As she is going, he catches hold of her.*

Ver. Oh, stay! [*Looking fondly at her*] by heavens thou canst not be false.

Bel. Be not too sure of any thing; I was too sure you never cou'd have thought me so.

Ver. Oh! did you know the torments of my mind, you'd pity, not upbraid me.

Bel. Witness heav'n I do pity you; and while I am rack'd with torments of my own, I feel yours too.

Ver. Oh! thou art all angel: would I had had no ears, or he no tongue, or that I had lost my own, ere I had said—I believe, I know thee innocent; thy mind is white as purest snow. But Oh! that curs'd suspicion has blacken'd mine. I never shall forgive it to myself.

Bel. For my sake, ease the tempests of your mind. I'll never think on't more.

Ver. When I deserve it, do. Surely thou art more than woman. How dearly mightest thou have revenged my unjust accusation, by keeping me a few moments in the horror of having offended thee, or doubt of thy pardon.

Bel. Unkindly you think me capable of such a behaviour. No, Veromil, I know the sincerity of your love ——and wou'd not give you an uneasy hour, to gain more worlds than you deserve.

Ver. Hear her, ye wanton fools, who sacrifice your own and lover's happiness to fantastic triumphs, and an ill-judging world. O, may'st thou be the pattern of thy sex; till women, learning by thy bright example, wipe off the scandals which are thrown upon them. O, let me press thee to my heart for ever.

Still searching out new beauties in thy mind,
A perfect woman till I prove, design'd
By heaven, its greatest blessing on mankind.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

SCENE, *continues.*

WILDING, PINCET.

WILDING.

You have your part perfect?

Pin. As my catechism, Sir; and I'll engage, that I act it to your satisfaction. If I am not revenged on

those blows of yours, old gentleman——if I don't make your heart bleed, may you fetch the last drop out of mine!

Wild. Fetch but the money out of his pocket—

Pin. That's my intention——the way to most men's hearts is through their pockets.

Wild. But do you think he will not discover you when you are disguis'd in the gown?

Pin. Oh, Sir! you need not fear that; a gown will hide a rogue at any time.

Wild. Away, then; for, should the old gentleman see us together, we are ruin'd. My affairs in this house are in a very good situation. Here are four ladies in it, and I am in a fair way of being happy with three of them. Agad, I begin to wish myself fairly off with my two aunts; for I think a modest and reasonable man can desire no more than one woman out of a family. But, I have gone too far to make an honourable retreat; for women act in love, as heroes do in war; their passions are not presently rais'd for the combat: but when once up, there's no getting off without fighting. Here comes one. Humph! [*Stands with his arms across.*

SCENE II.

LADY GRAVELY, WILDING.

L. Gra. Are you meditating, Mr. Wilding?

Wild. Lady Gravely, I ask a thousand pardons.

L. Gra. Oh! you can't recommend yourself to me more; I love to see young men thoughtful. And really, young men now-a-days seem to be ashamed to think.

Wild. They ought to be so! for the only excuse to their actions is a supposition that they do not.

L. Gra. That's very justly said. I find you and I sympathize in opinion.

Wild. Their dress, however, wou'd persuade one otherwise: the care and art employed in that seem the effects of thought——.

L. Gra.—In milliners, and *Valets des Chambres.*

Wild. I wonder how they recommend themselves to so many fine ladies.

L. Gra. You mistake. There are half a dozen green-sickness girls, who look for beaus, and chalk, and those things——but they are equally despis'd by knowing women. For my part, I think them pardonable no longer than a doll.

Wild. And of no more use. Like that too, they rise in value, as they are richer dress'd.

L. Gra. They are my aversion.

Wild. That, I fear, our whole sex is.

L. Gra. That's too generally spoken, I can't say all; I have found two exceptions already——and I don't know but I have seen a third.

Wild. Is it possible!

L. Gra. You can't guess how excessively some things you have said have succeeded in my favour.

Wild. O, my happiness!

L. Gra. So much, that I shall do for you—what, I vow I never did to any but my husbands.

Wild. Soh! [*Aside.*

L. Gra. Yet I fear I shall not prevail on you.

Wild. O, my angel! I vow by this soft hand I'll instantly obey.

L. Gra. Then I will give you my advice.—Think no more of Bellaria.

Wild. Humph.

L. Gra. What can she have to tempt you?

Wild. She is really handsome.

L. Gra. Her face, indeed, looks pretty well; but she paints. Then for her shape; she bolsters her stays. Then I'll tell you two particular deformities—she has a rotten tooth in the left side of her upper jaw, and crooked legs.

Wild. Still, Madam, there is one pleasure, which recompenses all; my marrying your niece will entitle me to your conversation.

L. Gra. So far from that—If you marry her, I'll never see you more.

Wild. What reason can you have?

L. Gra. A thousand—the world might suspect our familiarity; how must my reputation then suffer! O I would not for worlds even now be thought—but now a thousand excuses might be made.——There's no consanguinity in the case; the naughtiness of others; an agreeable young man! passion of love!

Wild. Oh, my saint!

[*He takes her by the hand, and during the rest of the scene, is hauling her to the door.*

L. Gra. Though I wou'd not now—yet—if I did—my reputation wou'd suffer in so small a degree—now-a-days scarce at all.—And if you were secret.

Wild. No torments shou'd extort it from me.

L. Gra. I shou'd have only my own conscience to satisfy.—And tho' no conscience is more tender: yet, temptations allowed for—

Sir Har. [*without.*] Harry! Harry! where's Harry?

L. Gra. I faint, I die, I am undone! run, run into that chamber, and fasten the door on the inside: I'll knock when you may come out.

SCENE III.

SIR HARRY WILDING, LADY GRAVELY.

Sir Har. Have you seen my son, Madam?

L. Gra. Not since dinner, Sir Harry.

Sir Har. What can become of him! I have been beating about this half hour. I have unkennell'd a fox in less time.

L. Gra. Sir Harry, you may thank your stars that conducted you to me; for perhaps it is in my power to save your son from ruin.

Sir Har. How, Madam!

L. Gra. I fear he is about marrying a woman who will make him miserable.

Sir Har. No, no, Madam, I have taken care to prepare such a match as shall make him happy.

L. Gra. Perhaps you are mistaken. I speak against my relation; but honour obliges it. In short, Sir Harry, my niece has not those principles which can make a good wife.

Sir Har. I ask your pardon, Madam, she has twenty thousand pounds—very good principles, I think.

L. Gra. She is a wild, flirting, giddy jilt.

Sir Har. Is that all?

L. Gra. I am afraid she is no better than she shou'd be.

Sir Har. I don't expect it.

L. Gra. Her reputation has a flaw——a flaw, as wide in it——

Sir Har. She has money enough to stop it up, Madam.

L. Gra. Wou'd you marry your son to a woman who has a flaw in her reputation?

Sir Har. If she had as many as she has pounds; and if I were to receive a pound for every flaw, the more she had the better. [*Exit.*

L. Gra. What shall I do. If he marries her, I lose him for ever.—I am distracted.

SCENE IV.

LADY LUCY, LADY GRAVELY, YOUNG PEDANT.

L. Lucy. You seem discompos'd sister; what's the matter?

L. Gra. I suppose you are in the plot too.

L. Lucy. What plot?

L. Gra. To sell my niece; to give her up to a wild, raking, extravagant young fellow; to Wilding.

L. Lucy. Indeed you wrong me. I came this moment to consult with you how to prevent it. Not that I imagine Wilding what you call him, nor that Bellaria would be unhappy with him; but I have another's happiness in my view.

L. Gra. Distraction! she's in love with him herself. [*Aside.*

L. Lucy. Now, my dear, if you may be trusted with a secret.

L. Gra. Any secret is safe with me, that is not contrary to virtue and honour.

L. Lucy. Nay, but I am afraid that you refine too much on those words.

L. Gra. Refine, Madam! I believe to censure your conduct needs no refinement. I see very well what your drift is; I know what you wou'd say.

Y. Ped. Hold, aunt; that you can know what my mother is going to say is denied; for to know one's thoughts, before that knowledge is conveyed by words,

implies a supernatural insight into the mind. It will be proper, therefore, to prove you have that insight, before any assent to your proposition can be requir'd.

L. Gra. Fool! coxcomb! pedant! You shou'd be sent to an academy to learn men, before you converse with them; or else be confin'd to a tub, as one of your philosophers were, till you had learnt enough to know you are a fool.

Y. Ped. Aunt, I wish a female relation of mine was shut up, till any one thought her wise, beside herself. ——Shut up in a tub! I agree, so that no women trouble me. I had rather live in a tub by myself than in a palace with a woman. You see, Madam, what an encouragement I have to marry.—What a task must I undertake, to marry a girl, when my aunt, who has had two husbands, is not half tam'd. Get me such a wife as Andromache was, and I'll marry; but for your fine ladies, as you term them, I wou'd as soon put on a laced coat; for they are both alike: your fine coat is only admired when new, no more is your fine lady; your fine coat is most commonly the property of a fool, so is your fine lady. Your fine coat is to be bought, so is your fine lady. I despise them both to an excessive degree.

L. Lucy. Leave us, Sir, 'till you learn more manners.

Y. Ped. I obey willingly.

SCENE V.

LADY LUCY, LADY GRAVELY.

L. Lucy. A pedant is a most intolerable wretch: I'm afraid she'll never endure him.

L. Gra. Who endure him?

L. Lucy. That is my secret.——Sir Avarice sent for this wretch to town, in order to match him to Bellaria

I was afraid to trust you with it, because of your nice principles.

L. Gra. Indeed, I do not approve of any clandestine affair: but since it is the lesser evil of the two, it is to be preferr'd; for nothing can equal the misery of marrying a rake. O! the vast happiness of a life of vapours with such a husband.

L. Lucy. I am a little in the vapours at this present: I wish, my dear, you wou'd give me a spoonful of your ratafia.

L. Gra. Was ever any thing so unfortunate!—It is in the closet of my chamber, and I have lost the key.

L. Lucy. One of mine will open it.

L. Gra. Besides, now I think on't—I threw down the bottle yesterday, and broke it.

L. Lucy. You have more; for I drank some this morning.

L. Gra. Did you so? then, I assure you, you shall taste no more this day; I'll have some regard for your health, if you have none.

L. Lucy. Nay, I will have one drop.

L. Gra. Indeed you shan't.

L. Lucy. Indeed I will.

[*They struggle*, Lady Lucy *gets to the door and pushes it.*

SCENE VI.

To them WILDING *from the closet.*

L. Lucy. If this be your ratafia, you may keep it all to yourself: the very sight of it has cured me. Ha, ha, ha!

L. Gra. Sir, if I may expect truth from such as you, confess by what art, and with what design, you convey'd yourself into my chamber.

L. Lucy. Confess, Sir, by what art did you open the door when the key was lost?

L. Gra. I cannot suspect a gentleman of a design to rob me.

L. Lucy. Only, like a gentleman, of what you wou'd not be a bit the poorer for losing.

L. Gra. Speak, Sir; how got you there? what was your design?

L. Lucy. He is dumb.

L. Gra. He is inventing a lie, I suppose.

L. Lucy. He is bringing forth truth, I believe: it comes so difficultly from him.

Wild. If I am not revenged on you, Madam!—Look ye, ladies, since our design is prevented, I don't know why it shou'd be kept a secret: so, Lady Lucy, you have my leave to tell it.

L. Lucy. I tell!

L. Gra. Oh! the creature! is she in the plot? O virtue, virtue! whither art thou flown! O the monstrous impiety of the age!

Wild. Nay, there was no such impiety in the case neither: so tell, Lady Lucy!

L. Lucy. Surprising!

L. Gra. Oh! the confidence of guilt!

Wild. Come, come, discover all: tell her ladyship the whole design of your putting me in her chamber.——But you will own you have lost the wager.

L. Lucy. Impudence beyond belief!

L. Gra. Tell me, Sir; I beseech you, tell me.

Wild. Only a wager between Lady Lucy and me, whether your ladyship was afraid of sprites. So Lady Lucy conveyed me into your chamber; and if, upon my stalking out as frightful as possible, your ladyship shriek'd out, I was to lose the wager.

L. Lucy. Prodigious!

L. Gra. No, no, it is for evil consciences to fear; innocence will make me bold; but let me tell you, sister, I do not like jesting with serious things. So you thought to frighten me, Sir: I am not to be frighten'd, I assure you.——

L. Lucy. By any thing in the shape of a man, I am confident. [*Aside.*

Servant. [*entering.*] Lady Basto, Madam, is at the door.

L. Gra. I am to go with her to Deards's. I forgive your frolic, sister, and I hope you are convinced that I am not afraid of sprites.

SCENE VII.

LADY LUCY, WILDING.

L. Lucy. Leave the room.

Wild. When you command with a smile, I obey: but as a fine lady never frowns but in jest, what she says then may be supposed to be spoken in jest too.

L. Lucy. This assurance is insupportable; to belie me to my sister; before my face too.

Wild. Hear this now! What way shall a man take to please a woman? Did you not desire me to make love to her for your diversion? Have I not done it? Am I not striving to bring matters to an issue? Should I not have frustrated it all at once, if I had not come off some way or other? What other way cou'd I have come off? Have I not been labouring, sweating, toiling for your diversion? and do you banish me for it?

L. Lucy. Nay, if this be true——

Wild. Rip open my heart, that fountain of truth, and there you will see it with your own dear image.

L. Lucy. Well then, do one thing, and I forgive you.

Wild. Any thing.

L. Lucy. Refuse my niece.

Wild. Any thing but that.

L. Lucy. You shall, you must.

Wild. To refuse a fine lady, with twenty thousand pounds, is neither in my will, nor in my power. It is against law, reason, justice——In short, it is a most execrable sin, and I'll die a martyr to matrimony ere I consent to it.

L. Lucy. And I'll die a thousand times rather than you shall have her.

Wild. What reason can you have?

L. Lucy. Ill-nature.

Wild. I see a better—you wou'd have me yourself. Look'ee, Madam, I'll lay a fair wager I am at liberty again before you. You will never bury Sir Avarice; you are not half fond enough. Kindness is the surest pill to an old husband; the greatest danger from a woman or a serpent is in their embraces.

L. Lucy. Indeed you are mistaken, wise Sir: I do not want to bury him; but if I did bury him, matrimony shou'd be the last folly I'd commit again, and you the last man in the world I'd think of for a husband.

Wild. But the first for a lover; my angel.

L. Lucy. Keep off. Remember the serpent.

Wild. I'm resolv'd to venture.

L. Lucy. I'll alarm the house; I'll raise the powers of heaven and hell to my assistance.

Wild. And I,

Clasp'd in the folds of love will meet my doom,
And act my joys, tho' thunder shake the room.

Sir Av. [*without*] Oh! the villain, the rogue!

Wild. It thunders now, indeed.

Sir Av. Was ever such a traitor heard of!

SCENE VIII.

To them SIR AVARICE PEDANT.

L. Lucy. What's the matter, Sir Avarice?

Sir Av. Ask me nothing: I am in such a passion, I shall never come to myself again.

L. Lucy. That will break my heart certainly.

Sir Av. We have harboured in our house a traitor, a thief, a villain.

L. Lucy. Whom, my dear.

Sir Av. The gentleman Valentine brought hither to-day I have overheard making love to Bellaria.

Wild. Whom, Veromil?

L. Lucy. I am glad to hear it. [*Aside.*

SCENE IX.

To them VALENTINE.

Sir Av. Pack up your all, Sir, pack up your all, and be gone: you shall not bring a set of idle vagabonds to my house, I am resolved.

Val. You surprise me, Sir! What vagabonds have I brought?

Sir Av. Why, good Sir! the gentleman you were so kind to introduce to me this day I have discovered addressing Bellaria.

Val. How, Sir!

Sir Av. I have overheard him, Sir, just now. So, if you please to go to him from me, and desire him civilly to walk out of my house.

Val. Nay, Sir,——if it be so——

Sir Av. And heark'ee, Sir, if you please to shew

him the way, to conduct him yourself, you will prevent my using rougher means. Here, Sir, you harbour no longer—I see him coming up the gallery; we'll leave you to deliver your message.—Hark you; cut his throat, and I will deal favourably with you in that affair: you know what I mean. [*Aside.*

SCENE X.

VALENTINE, VEROMIL.

Val. If Veromil be a villain!

Ver. Valentine, I am glad to find you: I have been looking for you.

Val. I am sorry Mr. Veromil should have acted in a manner to make our meeting uneasy to either. I am forced to deliver you a message from my uncle, less civil than I thought you cou'd have deserved.

Ver. What's this, Valentine!

Val. The violation of our long and tender friendship shocks me so I have hardly power to disclose your crime, more—than that you know my love, and have basely wronged it.

Ver. How, Sir!

Val. You have injur'd me—you know it.

Ver. Valentine, you have injur'd me, and do not know it: yet the injustice of the act you know. Yes, too well you know. religion forbids an injury to a stranger.

Val. Preach not religion to me.—Oh! it well becomes the mouth of hypocrisy to thunder Gospel tenets to the world, while there is no spark of honour in the soul.

Ver. You speak the meaning of a libertine age; the heart that throws off the face of religion wears but the masque of honour.

Val. Rather, he that has not honour wears but the mask of piety. Canting sits easy on the tongue that wou'd employ its rhetoric against a friend.

Ver. Your reflection on me is base and vain. You know I scorn the apprehension of doing a wrong.

Val. Ha!

Ver. Nay, 'tis true; true as that you did intend to wrong another; to rob him of his right, his love; and Heaven, in vengeance on the black design, ordained it to be your friend. Yes, Valentine, it was from me the beauteous, lovely Bellaria was torn; her whom I ignorantly wou'd have pursued abroad; and 'tis to you I owe that I am not robbed of her for ever.

Val. Curse on the obligation! 'Tis to chance, not me: for, had I known to whom I had discover'd her, thou hadst still been ignorant. But thus I cancel it, and all our friendship, in a breath. Henceforward I am thy foe.

Ver. Cou'd I as easily be thine I should deride and scorn thee, as I pity thee now. By Heav'ns! I should disclaim all friendship with a man who falsely wrong'd my love.——You I can forgive.

Val. Forgive! I ask it not. Do thy worst.

[*Laying his hand on his sword.*

Ver. Hero in sin! would'st thou seal all in thy friend's blood? Art thou a man, and can thy passions so outstrip thy reason, to send thee wading through falsehood, perjury, and murder after a flying light which you can ne'er o'ertake!—Think not I fear you as a rival. By Heav'n 'tis friendship bids me argue with you, bids me caution you from a vain pursuit, whence the utmost you can hope is to make her you pursue as wretched as her you have forsaken.

Val. Hell! hell and confusion!

Ver. You see she meets my passion with an equal

flame; and tho' a thousand difficulties may delay our happiness, they can't prevent it. Yours she can never be; for all your hopes must lie in her affection, which you will never gain. No, Valentine, I know myself so fixed, so rooted in that dear bosom, that art or force would both prove ineffectual.

Val. I'm rack'd to death!

Ver. Reflect upon the impossibility of your success—But grant the contrary; would you sacrifice our long, our tender friendship, to the faint, transitory pleasures of a brutal appetite? for love that is not mutual is no more.

Val. Grant not that I might succeed. No passion of my soul cou'd counterpoise my love, nor reason's weaker efforts make a stand against it.

Ver. Think it impossible then.

Val. Thou knowest not the strugglings of my breast; for Heaven never made so fine a form.

Ver. Can love, that's grounded on the outside only, make so deep an impression on your heart.—Possession soon wou'd quench those sudden flames. Beauty, my Valentine, as the flowery blossoms, soon fades; but the diviner excellences of the mind, like the medicinal virtues of the plant, remain in it, when all those charms are withered. Had not that beauteous shell so perfect an inhabitant, and were our souls not link'd, not joined so fast together, by Heav'n I wou'd resign her to my friend.

Val. O Veromil! Life, fortune, I cou'd easily abandon for thy friendship.—I will do more, and strive to forget thy mistress.

Ver. Let me applaud thy virtue, and press thy noble bosom to my heart.

Val. It will be necessary for you to remove from hence. I will, if possible, find some means to effect your

wishes. Within this hour you shall find me at the coffee-house.

Ver. Once more let me embrace thee.—The innocent, the perfect joy that flows from the reflection of a virtuous deed far surpasses all the trifling momentary raptures that are obtain'd by guilt. To triumph o'er a conquer'd passion is a pride well worthy of a man.

Safe o'er the main of life the vessel rides,
When passion furls her sails, and reason guides:
While she who has that surest rudder lost
'Midst rocks and quicksands by the waves is tost;
No certain road she keeps, no port can find,
Toss'd up and down by ev'ry wanton wind.

ACT V. SCENE I.

SCENE, CLARISSA'S *Apartment.*

CLARISSA *alone, rising from a table with a letter in her hand.*

So! the task is done: Heav'n knows how difficult a one; so entirely to subdue the stubbornness of my resentment. What have I writ? I will see once more.

[*Breaks open the letter.*

'If there be the least spark of honour remaining in 'your breast, you will, you must be obliged to relent of 'your behaviour towards me. I am now too well assured 'of the reason of your late conduct, from Bellaria: but 'as it is impossible you shou'd succeed there, I hope

——' I can read no farther—' I hope you will reflect on ' those vows you have so solemnly made to the unhappy

' CLARISSA.'

I am resolv'd not to send it.

[*Throws it down on the table.*

SCENE II.

To her VALENTINE.

Cla. Ha! he's here, and comes to insult me. Distraction.

Val. I fear, Madam, you are surprised at this sudden renewal of my visit.

Cla. I own, Sir, I expected your good-breeding, if not your good-nature, wou'd have forbidden you to continue your affronts to a woman—but if your making me uneasy, wretched, miserable, can do you any service to Bellaria——cruel! barbarous! how have I deserved this usage? If you can be cruel, perfidious, forsworn, forgetful of your honour——yet, sure, to insult me is beneath a man.

Val. If to relent——if with a bleeding heart to own my crime, and with tears to ask your pardon, be insulting——

Cla. Ha!

Val. See, see my grief, and pity me. I cannot excuse, nor dare I name my crime; but here will kneel 'till you forgive it.

Cla. Nay, since you repent, you shall not have a cause for kneeling long—Rise, I forgive it.

Val. Sure, such transcendent goodness never commanded a woman's heart before! it gives new strength to my reviving passion; a love which never more shall know decay. Let us this moment tie the joyful knot.

Cla. Never, never, Valentine. As a Christian, I forgive you; but as a lover, will never regard you more. O, I have seen too lively an instance of your inconstancy!

Val. Forbid it, Heaven!

Cla. May it, indeed, forbid our marriage. No, Valentine, if ever more I hearken to your vows; if ever I once think of you as my husband, may I——

Val. Swear not, I conjure you; for unless you make me happy in yourself, your pardon but augments my misery.

Cla. 'Tis all in vain.—Were you to kneel, swear, threaten, I'd never grant it. If my forgiveness will content you, well; if not, you never shall have more. There is another more worthy of my love.

Val. Oh! name him.

Cla. Not 'till your vengeance shall come too late.

Val. This letter may unfold——

[*Takes the letter from the table.*

Cla. Oh! I am ruin'd.—Deliver it, ravisher.

Val. What do I see?——Is it possible!

Cla. It will do you little service.

Val. Not to discover the man: but it has shewn me a woman in the liveliest colours. This letter, Madam, is the production of no new amour. 'Tis too plain, you are false. Oh! how happy is this discovery. What a wretch shou'd I have been, with the cast, forgotten, slighted mistress of another. When I see you next, when I am that slave to ask, to wish, to hope you for a wife, may I be curs'd with all the plagues that ever curs'd a husband.—Adieu.

Cla. Oh! stay, and hear my innocence.

Val. 'Tis impossible.

Cla. You, you are the man, whose forgotten mistress you have call'd me—I blush to say, 'twas you to whom

that letter was intended. Nay, read, read the direction.

Val. Amazement!

Cla. Your genius is triumphant, and here my empire ends; for I must own, with blushing shame must own, that all my disdain to you has still been counterfeit. I had a secret growing love for you, even before you first intimated yours. But I am sure the agonies I have this day felt have severely revenged all those pangs my vanity has given you.——So here's my hand.

Val. Let my eternal gratitude demonstrate with what raptures I receive it.

SCENE III.

To them BELLARIA, *with an open letter.*

Bel. I am witness of the bargain. The farther sealing it shall be perform'd at the finishing another.—I have consider'd your friend's proposals, [*Shews the letter*] and approve them.

Val. I hope then, Madam, my diligence in their execution will prevail on you to forget——

Bel. I am sure I shall have no reason to recollect——

Val. This goodness, Madam, at the same time that it pardons, pleads also an excuse for my crime.—I shall do my utmost to merit it.

SCENE IV.

CLARISSA, BELLARIA.

Cla. I am afraid, my dear, my late conduct has appear'd very strange to you, after what you have formerly seen.

Bel. Your former conduct was to me much more wonderful; for, to disguise our passions is, in my opinion, a harder task than to discover them. I have often laughed at the ridiculous cruelty of women; to torment ourselves to be revenged on an enemy is absurd; but to do it, that we may give pain to a lover, is as monstrous a folly as 'tis a barbarity.

Cla. You wou'd strip beauty of all its power?

Bel. I wou'd strip beauty of all its imperfections, and persuade her whom nature has adorn'd without, to employ her chief art to adorn herself within; for, believe it, my dear Clarissa, a pretty face, over-affectation, pride, ill-nature, in a word, over-coquetry is but a gilt cover over a volume of nonsense, which will be despised by all wise men; and, having been expos'd to sale for a few years in all the public auctions of the town, will be doomed to rust neglected in the possession of a coxcomb!

SCENE V.

To them WILDING, *and* SIR HARRY *dress'd and powder'd.*

Sir Har. Madam, your most humble servant. I suppose, Madam, Sir Avarice has open'd the affair to you which has brought me to town; it was settled before I left the country, as to the material points. Nothing now remains but the ceremonies of the marriage, &c. —So this visit is to desire to know what day you fix on for that purpose.

Bel. Your method of proceeding, Sir, something surprises me! Your son has never mentioned a word of that nature to me.

Sir Har. Alack-a-day, Madam! the boy is modest;

Harry's modest, Madam: but alas! you are the only person to whom he has not mentioned it: perhaps the rogue may think, as old Cowley says;

> 'I will not ask her—'tis a milder fate,
> To fall by her not loving, than her hate.'

Bel. Very gallant, Sir Harry! By what I can see, you give greater proofs of love than your son does.

Wild. I wish these lovely eyes cou'd see as far into my heart as they pierce: I shou'd not then be oblig'd to paint in the weak colouring of words a passion no language can express, because none ever felt before.

Sir Har. To her, boy, to her. I'll leave you together. Come, young lady, you must not spoil sport.

SCENE VI.

WILDING, BELLARIA.

Wild. I am afraid, Madam, what you have heard me rally of matrimony makes you suspect my ill opinion of it; but that state, which, with all other women, wou'd be hell to me, with you is paradise, is heaven. Oh! let me touch that tender hand, and pressing it in raptures to my heart——

Bel. Ay, this is something like love; by that time you have sighed away two years in this manner, I may be persuaded to admit you into the number of my admirers.

Wild. [*Aside.*] I shall be admitted into Bedlam first, I hope.—'Tis that very thing makes so many couple unhappy; for you ladies will have all your love beforehand, and then you expect it all afterwards. Like a thoughtless heir, who spends his estate before he is in

the possession; with this difference—he antedates his pleasures, you postpone them.

Bel. Finely argued! I protest, Mr. Wilding, I did not think you had made such a proficience in your studies.—It would be pity to take so promising a young man from the bar.——You may come to be a judge.

Wild. You only rally me; for I cannot think you believe that I ever studied law: dress, and the ladies, have employed my time.—I protest to you, Madam, I know no more of the law, than I do of the moon.

Bel. I thought you had been six years in the Temple.

Wild. Ha, ha, ha! Madam, you may as well think I am a scholar, because I have been at Oxford, as that I am a lawyer, because I have been at the Temple.

Bel. So, then, you have deceived your father in the character of a lawyer; how shall I be sure you will not me in that of a lover?

Wild. Oh! a thousand ways, Madam: first, by my countenance; then by the temptation; and lastly, I hope you will think I talk like a lover. No one, I am sure, ever heard me talk like a lawyer.

Bel. Indeed you do now,—very like one; for you talk for a fee.

Wild. Nay, Madam, that's ungenerous. How shall I assure you? if oaths will——I swear——

Bel. No, no, no; I shall believe you swear like a lawyer too—that is, I shall not believe you at all. Or, if I was to allow your oaths came from a lover, it wou'd be much the same; for I think truth to be a thing in which lovers and lawyers agree.

Wild. Is there no way of convincing you?

Bel. Oh! yes. I will tell you how. You must flatter me egregiously; not only with more perfections than I have, but than ever any one had; for which you must submit to very ill usage. And when I have treated you

like a tyrant over-night, you must, in a submissive letter, ask my pardon the next morning, for having offended me; though you had done nothing.

Wild. This is easy.

Bel. You must follow me to all public-places where I shall give an unlimited encouragement to the most notorious fools I can meet with, at which you are to seem very much concerned, but not dare to upbraid me with it——then, if, when I am going out you offer me your hand, I don't see you, but give it to one of the fools I mentioned—

Wild. This is nothing.

Bel. Then you are sometimes to be honour'd with playing with me at quadrille; where, to shew you my good-nature, I will take as much of your money as I can possibly cheat you of. And when you have done all these, and twenty more such trifling things, for one five years, I shall be convinc'd—that you are an ass, and laugh at you five times more heartily than I do now. Ha, ha, ha!

SCENE VII.

WILDING *alone.*

Shall you so?—I may give you reason for another sort of passion long before that time. I shall be master of the citadel with a much shorter siege, I believe.—She is a fine creature; but pox of her beauty, I shall surfeit on't in six days' enjoyment. The twenty thousand pound! there's the solid charm, that may last, with very good management, almost as many years.

SCENE VIII.

To him LADY GRAVELY.

Your ladyship's most humble servant. You have not made a great many visits.

L. Gra. No, the lady I went with has been laying out a great sum of money; she carried me as a sort of appraiser; for I am thought to have some judgment. But I believe Sir Harry is coming up stairs. I was desired to give you this by one who has an opinion of my secrecy and yours.

SCENE IX.

WILDING, *solus, reads.*

'I hear, by Sir Harry, you have a great collection of 'books. You know my curiosity that way, so send me 'the number of your chambers, and this evening I will 'come and look over them.'

What shall I do? If I disappoint her, her resentment may be of ill consequence, and I must expect the most warm one. I do not care neither, at this crisis, to let her into the secret of my deceit on my father. Suppose I appoint her at young Pedant's—that must be the place. And, since I can't wait on her myself, I'll provide her other company. I'll appoint Lady Lucy at the same time and place; so they will discover one another, and I shall be rid of them both, which I begin to wish; for, since I have been propos'd a wife out of it, my stomach is turn'd against all the rest of the family.

SCENE X.

PINCET, *as a counsellor*, SERVANT.

Serv. I believe, Sir, Sir Harry is in the house; if you please to walk this way, I'll bring you to him.

Pin. But stay; enquire if he has any company with him—if so, you may let him know I am here, and would be glad to speak with him.

Serv. Whom, Sir, shall I mention?

Pin. A counsellor at law, Sir.

Serv. Sir, I shall.

Pin. I am not much inclined to fear or superstition, or I should think I this day saw the ghost of him I've injur'd. I cannot rest with what I have done, nor know I well by what course to make a reparation.—But here comes my game.

SCENE XI.

To him, SIR HARRY, *and* WILDING.

Mr. Wilding, your servant. I presume this may be my client, the good Sir Harry.

Sir Har. Sir!

Pin. I believe, Sir Harry, I have not the honour of being known to you. My name is Ratsbane—Counsellor Ratsbane, of the Inner Temple. I have had, Sir, according to the order of your son, a conference with Mr. Counsellor Starchum, who is for the plaintiff, and have come to a conclusion thereon.

Sir Har. Oh! have you?—I am your humble servant,

dear Sir; and if it lies in my power to oblige you, in return——

Pin. Oh, dear Sir! No obligation! we only do our duty. Our case will be this—first, a warrant will be issued; upon which, we are taken up; then we shall be indicted; after which, we are convicted (that no doubt we shall, on such a strength of proof), immediately sentence is awarded against us, and then execution regularly follows.

Sir Har. Execution, Sir!—what execution?

Wild. Oh! my unfortunate father!—Hanging, Sir.

Pin. Ay, ay, hanging, hanging is the regular course of law; and no way to be averted. But, as to our conveyance to the place of execution, that I believe we shall be favoured in. The sheriff is to render us there; but whether in a coach or cart, I fancy a small sum may turn that scale.

Sir Har. Coach or cart! Hell and the devil! Why son, why Sir, is there no way left?

Pin. None. We shall be convicted of felony, and then hanging follows of course.

Wild. It's too true—so says Coke against Littleton.

Sir Har. But Sir, dear Sir, I am as innocent—

Pin. Sir, the law proceeds by evidence—my brother Starchum indeed offered, that upon a bond of five thousand pounds he would make up the affair; but I thought it much too extravagant a demand; and so I told him flatly——we wou'd be hang'd.

Sir Har. Then you told a damn'd lie; for if twice that sum would save us, we will not.

Pin. How, Sir, are you willing to give that money?

Sir Har. No, Sir, I am not willing; but I am much less willing to be hang'd.

Wild. But do you think, Mr. Counsellor, you cou'd not prevail for four thousand?

Pin. That truly we cannot reply to, till a conference be first had.

Sir Har. Ay, or four hundred?

Pin. Four hundred?——why it would cost you more the other way, if you were hang'd anything decently. Look you, Sir, Mr. Starchum is at the Crown and Rolls just by; if you please we will go thither, and I assure you to make the best bargain I can.

Wild. Be quick, Sir; here's Sir Avarice coming.

Sir Har. Come along—Oons! I wou'd not have him know it for the world.

SCENE XII.

VALENTINE, SIR AVARICE, YOUNG PEDANT.

Val. Have but the patience to hear me, Sir. The gentleman I unwittingly brought hither was the very man on whose account Bellaria was sent to town.

Sir Av. How!

Val. Bellaria, imagining me his friend, in the highest rage of despair, when she found her lover discover'd, laid open her whole breast to me, and begg'd my advice; I have promised to contrive an interview. Now, I will promise her to convey her to Veromil, and bring her to a place where she shall meet you and your son. When you have her there, and a parson with you, if you do not finish the affair, it will be your own fault.

Sir Av. Hum! it has an appearance.

Val. But, Sir, I shall not do this, unless you deliver me up those writings of mine in your hands, which you unjustly detain.

Sir Av. Sir!

Val. And moreover, Sir, unless you do, I will frustrate your design for ever.

Sir Av. Very well, Sir, when she is married.

Val. Sir, I will have no conditions. What I ask is my own, and unless you grant it, I will publish your intentions to the world, sooner than you can accomplish them.

Sir Av. Well, well, I'll fetch them; stay you here, and expect my return.

SCENE XIII.

VALENTINE, YOUNG PEDANT.

Y. Ped. Cousin Valentine, have I offended you? have I injured you in any way?

Val. No, dear cousin.

Y. Ped. Will you please, Sir, then to assign the reason why you do contrive my ruin, by espousing me to this young woman.

Val. Are you unwilling?

Y. Ped. Alas! Sir, matrimony has ever appeared to me a sea full of rocks and quicksands; it is Scylla, of whom Virgil—

'Delphinum caudas utero commissa luporum;

Or as Ovid—

'Gerens latrantibus inguina monstris.'

Val. Well, then you may be comforted; for I assure you, so far from bringing you into this misfortune, I am taking measures to deliver you out of it.

SCENE XIV.

To them, SIR AVARICE.

Sir Av. Here, Sir, is a note which I believe will content you.

Val. How, Sir; these are not my writings.

Sir Av. No, Sir; but if your intentions are as you say, it is of equal value with them. I have there promis'd to pay you the sum which you say I have in my hands, on the marriage of my niece. Now, if you scruple accepting that condition, I shall scruple trusting her in your hands.

Val. [*Having read it and mus'd.*] Well, Sir, to shew you my sincerity, I do accept it; and you shall find I will not fail delivering the young lady at the appointed hour and place.

Sir Av. Let the hour be eight, and the place my son's chambers. I'll prepare matters that nobody shall prevent you. And hark'ee, suppose you give her a dose of opium in a dish of chocolate: if she were married half asleep, you and I could swear she was awake, you know.

Y. Ped. I cannot assent to that. Suppose the *Positum* be——
The woman is but half asleep: will it follow,
Ergo, she is awake?

Sir Av. The *Positum* is twenty thousand pounds—*ergo*—I will swear any thing.

Y. Ped. Oh dear! oh dear! was ever such logic heard of? did Burgersdicius ever hint at such a method of reasoning?

Sir Av. Burgersdicius was an ass, and so are you.

Val. Be not in a passion, Sir Avarice; our time is short. I will go perform my part; pray, observe yours.

SCENE XV

SIR AVARICE PEDANT, YOUNG PEDANT.

Sir Av. Logic, indeed! can your logic teach you more

than this? two and two make four: take six out of seven, and there remains one. The sum given is twenty thousand pounds; take naught out of twenty, and there remains a score. If your great logician, your Aristotle, was alive, take naught out of his pocket, and there wou'd remain naught. A complete notion of figures is beyond all the Greek and Latin in the world. Learning is a fine thing, indeed, in an age when of the few that have it the greater part starve. I remember when a set of strange fellows us'd to meet at Wills' coffee-house; but now it's another Change-Alley. Every man now who wou'd live, must be a stock-jobber.—Here is twenty thousand pounds capital stock fallen into your hands, and wou'd you let it slip?

Y. Ped. But, Sir, is not injustice a——

Sir Av. Injustice! Hark you, sirrah! I have been guilty of five hundred pieces of injustice for a less sum. I don't see why you shou'd reap the benefit of my labours, without joining your own.

SCENE XVI.

YOUNG PEDANT'S *Chambers.*

LADY GRAVELY, SERVANT.

L. Gra. Your master has not been at home yet?

Ser. No, Madam; but if you please to divert yourself with these books, I presume he will not be long. (I dare not ask her what master she means, for fear of a mistake: though, as I am in no great doubt what her ladyship is, I suppose it to be my beau master.) [*Aside.*

L. Gra. It is now past the time of our appointment; and a lover who retards the first will be very backward indeed on the second. His bringing me off yesterday to

my sister gave me no ill assurance of both his honour and his wit. I wish this delay wou'd not justify my suspecting his love.—Hark, I hear him coming.

SCENE XVII.

LADY LUCY, LADY GRAVELY.

L. Gra. Ah!

L. Lucy. Sister, your servant; your servant, sister.

L. Gra. I am surpris'd at meeting you here.

L. Lucy. Ha, ha, ha! I am a little surpris'd too. Ha, ha!

L. Gra. I have scarce strength enough to tell you how I came here. I was walking up from the Temple-stairs to take a chair, (I'll never venture myself alone by water as long as I live) what shou'd I meet but a rude young Templar, who wou'd have forced me to a tavern; but, by great fortune, another Templar, meeting us, endeavoured to wrest me from him: at which my ravisher let go my hand to engage his adversary. I no sooner found myself at liberty, but, seeing a door open, in I run, so frighted, I shall never recover it.

L. Lucy. You were a little unfortunate tho', not to find the doctor at home.

L. Gra. What doctor?

L. Lucy. Ha, ha, ha! Doctor Wilding, my dear, a physician of great practice among the ladies——I presume your ladyship uses him.

L. Gra. I know no such physician.

L Lucy. But you know a gentleman of that name, I suppose.

L Gra. Sure I am not in that wretch's chambers!

L. Lucy. Indeed you are.

L. Gra. It must be the devil, or my evil genius, that

has laid this trap for me,——What can have brought you hither too?

L. Lucy. A chair, my dear.

L. Gra. By what accident?

L. Lucy. By my own orders.

L. Gra. How, sister!

L. Lucy. Indeed, sister, 'tis true.

L. Gra. And have you the confidence to own it to me? I desire, Madam, you wou'd not make me privy to your intrigues: I shall not keep them secret, I assure you. She who conceals a crime is in a manner accessory to it.

L. Lucy. I see your policy. You wou'd preserve yourself by sacrificing me: but tho' a thief saves his life by sacrificing his companion, he saves not his reputation. Your nice story of a couple of Templars will not be admitted by the court of scandal at Lady Prude's tea-table.

L. Gra. Madam, Madam, my brother shall know what a wife he has.

L. Lucy. Madam, Madam, the world shall know what a sister I have.

L. Gra. I disclaim your kindred. You are no relation of mine.

L. Lucy. You make me merry.

L. Gra. I may spoil your mirth: at least I'll prevent it this time, I'm resolv'd.

L. Lucy. That's more ill-natur'd than I'll shew myself to you—so, your servant. [*Exit.*

L. Gra. I'll take a hackney coach and be at home before her—I see he's a villain; but I'll find a way to be revenged on them both.

L. Lucy. (*Re-entering.*) O! for heaven's sake, let us lay aside all quarrels, and take care of both our reputations. Here's a whole coach load coming up stairs. I

heard them enquire for these chambers——Here's a closet; in, in—I never was so frightened in my whole life.

SCENE XVIII.

VALENTINE, VEROMIL, BELLARIA, CLARISSA.

Ver. The clergyman outstays his time, or the impatience of my love outflies it. I'm rack'd till the dear bond be tied beyond the power of art to undo. Think then, my sweet, if the least apprehension of losing thee can shock my soul; what agonies must I have liv'd in, when hope was as distant as fear is now.

Bel. Too easily, my Veromil, I guess; I know them by my own; for sure I am not in debt one sigh to love.

Ver. In debt! not all the service of my life can pay thee for a tender thought of me. Oh! how I long for one soft hour to tell thee all I've undergone. For to look back upon a dreadful sea, which we've escaped, adds to the prospect of the beauteous country which we are to enjoy.

Servant. [*Entering.*] Gentlemen, a clergyman in the other room——

Ver. Come, my Bellaria, a few short moments lead me into Paradise.

Val. Wou'd thou hadst found another; but love forbids you this—You know I strove with all my power against it; but it has conquer'd——and through my heart you only reach Bellaria.

Ver. Ha! Nay then, wert thou as much my friend, as thou art unworthy of the name——through twenty hearts like thine, I'd rush into her arms.

[*Fight. The women shriek.* Lady Lucy, Lady Gravely, *run out of the closet; they*

all hold Valentine; *and as* Veromil is *leading off* Bellaria, Sir Harry, Wilding, *and* Pincet *meet them at the door.*]

Then take thy life—and now, my sweetest——

SCENE XIX.

SIR HARRY WILDING, WILDING, PINCET, LADY LUCY, LADY GRAVELY, VALENTINE, VEROMIL, BELLARIA, *and* CLARISSA.

Val. Away. Stand off. Eternal furies seize you.

L. Lucy. You may rave, good Sir; but three women will be too hard for you, though you were as stout and as mad as Hercules.

Sir Har. Hey-day! we had but one whore before, here's a seraglio.

Ver. Let me pass, Sir.

Sir Har. No, indeed, Sir. I must first know how you came here, and then, perhaps, you shall pass——to the Round-house.

Ver. Then I'll force my way thus.

Wild. Nay, I must secure my father.

[Veromil *makes at* Sir Harry, Wilding *interposes —he pushes at* Wilding, *and is disarmed—the ladies loose* Valentine.]

Bel. Oh heav'ns! my Veromil, you are not wounded?

Ver. Through the heart, Bellaria, by this prevention.

Bel. Be easy then; for all the powers of hell shall never part us.

SCENE XX.

To them SIR AVARICE, YOUNG PEDANT.

Sir Av. Hey! what have we here? my wife, and sister, and Sir Harry, and all the world!

Sir Har. Death and the devil! what does this mean?

Sir Av. Nay, good people! how came you all here?

Sir Har. Ay, how came you all here? for I will know before any one go out——

Pin. Sir, I beg to be excus'd— [*Offering to go.*

Sir Har. Not a step: I shall have business for you. I'll see by what law these people make a public rendezvous of my son's chambers.

Sir Av. Your son's chambers, Sir Harry!

Y. Ped. That they were his, *datur*—that they are his, *negatur*—for the time that they were lent for is expired —*ergo*, they were his, but are not.

L. Lucy. }
L. Gra. } What's this?

Sir Har. Were his, but are not—What, have you sold these too, Harry!

Wild. 'Twill out.

Sir Har. Speak, Sir; why don't you speak? are not these your chambers?

Wild. No, Sir.

Sir Av. His!

L. Lucy. His, indeed!

L. Gra. What do you think, Sir Harry, I shou'd do in your son's chambers?

L. Lucy. Or what do you see here like the apartment of a beau—but I ask pardon. Your son is a lawyer.

Omnes. A lawyer! Ha, ha, ha!

L. Gra. In short, Sir Harry, your son is as great a rake as any in town.

Y. Ped. And as ignorant as any at the university.

L. Lucy. Ay, or as one half of his brother Templars.

Sir Av. And as great a rogue, I am afraid, as the other half.

Sir Har. He shall be as great a beggar then as those that are honest.

Wild. That, Sir, an honest captain of my acquaintance will prevent; for as they were my locks that were broke open, he has given up those articles, you were pleased to enter into, to me and my use. For which I am to thank the honest counsellor Ratsbane; into whose possession you have given a bond of annuity of five hundred pounds a year.

Sir Har. Cheated! abus'd! dog! villain!—ha! I'll see whether I am able to recover it——

[*Searches* Pincet's *pockets, throws out several papers, and pulls his wig off.*

Wild. It's beyond your search, I assure you.

Pin. Help! murder!

Ver. Nay, Sir Harry!

Sir Har. Dog! rascal! I'll be revenged on you all——

SCENE XXI.

SIR AVARICE, YOUNG PEDANT, LADY LUCY, LADY GRAVELY, WILDING, VEROMIL, VALENTINE, BELLARIA, CLARISSA, *and* PINCET.

Ver. [*taking up a letter.*] Here's one of your papers, Sir—[*starts*] Gilbert, my father's servant!—[*looking on the letter*] By heav'ns! my brother's hand too—then my curiosity is pardonable. [*Reads it.*

Pin. Heaven I see is just.

Ver. Prodigious!—Gentlemen, I beg that man may be secur'd.

Wild. He is my servant, Sir.

Ver. He formerly was my father's—This letter here, which is from my brother to him, will inform you farther.

'GILBERT,

'I received yours, and should have paid you your half 'year's annuity long since, but I have had urgent 'occasions for my money—You say, it is hard to be 'reduced to your primitive degree, when you have 'ventur'd your soul to raise yourself to a higher; and 'a little after have the impudence to threaten to discover '—discover if you dare—you will then find you have 'ventur'd your body too; and that perjury will entitle 'you to the same reward as you audaciously say forgery 'will me——expect to hear no more from me. You 'may discover if you please, but you shall find I will 'not spare that money, which your roguery has assisted 'me in getting, to have the life of him who is the cause 'of my losing it.

'J. VEROMIL.'

Pin. If there yet want a stronger confirmation—I, Sir, the wretch whom the hopes of riches have betrayed to be a villain, will openly attest the discovery, and, by a second appearance in a public court, restore the lawful heir what my first coming there has robbed him of.

Bel. Is this possible?

Ver. Yes, my sweet——I am now again that Veromil, to whom you first were promised, and from whose breast nothing can tear you more. Sir Avarice, you may be at your ease; for it is now in my power to offer up a better fortune to this lady's merit than any of her pretenders.

Bel. No fortune can ever add to my love for you, nor loss diminish it.

Sir Av. What is the meaning of this?

Ver. That fortune, Sir, which recommended me to this lady's father, and which by forgery and perjury I was depriv'd of, my happy stars now promise to restore me.

Pin. You need not doubt your success. The other

evidence to the deed has been touched with the same scruples of conscience, and will be very ready on an assur'd pardon to recant.

Wild. Dear Veromil, let me embrace thee. I am heartily glad I have been instrumental in the procuring your happiness; and, tho' it is with my mistress, I wish you joy sincerely.

Ver. Wilding, I thank you; and in return, I wish you may be restor'd into your father's favour.

Wild. I make peace with sword in hand, and question not but to bring the old gentleman to reason.

Bel. There yet remains a quarrel in the company, which I would reconcile—Clarissa, I think I read forgiveness in your face; and I am sure penitence is very plain in Valentine's.

Val. I am too much a criminal to hope for pardon. Yet, if my fault may be atoned for, I will employ my utmost care to do it. Cou'd I think the acquisition of fortune any recommendation, Sir Avarice has obliged himself to pay me seven thousand pounds on this lady's marriage.

Sir Av. The conditions are not fulfill'd, Sir, and——

Val. Not till she is married, Sir. As you have not been pleased to mention to whom, Veromil will fill the place as well as any other.

Sir Av. Sir!

Val. Sir, what you have agreed to give is but my own; your conditions of delivering it are as scandalous as your retaining it: so you may make a bustle, and lose as much reputation as you please; but the money you will be obliged to pay.

Sir Av. And pray, Sir, why did you invite all this company hither?

Val. How some of it came here, I know no more than you do.

L. Gra. I can only account for myself and sister.

L. Lucy. Ay, my sister and I came together.

Wild. Mine is a long story: but I will divert you all with it some other time.

Pin. May I then hope your pardon?

Ver. Deserve it, and I will try to get his majesty's for you, which will do you most service.

SCENE *the last.*

To them a SERVANT.

Serv. An't please your honour, your honour's brother, Mr. Pedant, is just come to town, and is at home now with Sir Harry Wilding.

Sir Av. Then all my hopes are frustrated. Get chairs to the door.

Ver. This is lucky news indeed! and may be so for you too, Wilding: for Sir Harry is too good-humour'd a man to be an exception to the universal satisfaction of a company. I hope this lady will prevent the uneasiness of another. [*To* Clarissa.

Val. This generosity stabs me to the soul—Oh! my Veromil! my friend! let this embrace testify my repentance.

Ver. And bury what is past.

Val. Generous, noble soul!

Ver. Madam, give me leave to join your hands.

Bel. Nay, since I have been the honest cause of separating them, I must assist.

Cla. I know not whether the world will pardon my forgiving you——but——

Val. Oh! say no more, lest I am lost in too excessive joy.

L. Lucy. Indeed, I think she need not.

L. Gra. [*To* Wild.] Your excuses to me are vain. We have both discover'd you to be a villain. I have seen the assignation you made my sister, and she has seen mine: so you may be assured we will neither of us speak to you more.

Wild. I hope to give you substantial reasons for my conduct: at least my secrecy you may be assured of.

Sir Av. Come gentlemen and ladies, we will now adjourn, if you please, to my house; where, Sir, [*to* Ver.] if my brother and you agree (as certainly you will, if you prove your title to your father's estate) I have nothing to say against your match.

Y. Ped. Nor against my returning to the university, I hope.

Ver. Sir Avarice, I wait on you; and, before the conclusion of this evening, I hope you will not have a discontented mind in your house. Come, my dear Bellaria; after so many tempests, our fortune once more puts on a serene aspect; once more we have that happiness in view, which crowns the success of virtue, constancy, and love.

All love, as folly, libertines disclaim;
And children call their folly by its name.
Those joys which from its purest fountains flow,
No boy, no fool, no libertine can know:
Heav'n meant so blest, so exquisite a fate,
But to reward the virtuous and the great.

EPILOGUE:

WRITTEN BY A FRIEND AND SPOKEN BY MRS. GIFFARD.

CRITICS, no doubt, you think I come to pray
Your pardon for this foolish, virtuous play.
As Papists, by a saint; so authors practise
To get their crimes aton'd for by an actress.
Our author too wou'd fain have brought me to it
But, faith! I come to beg you'd damn the poet.
What did the dullard mean by stopping short,
And bringing in a husband to spoil sport?
No sooner am I in my lover's arms,
But—pop—my husband all our joys alarms!
Madam, to save your virtue, cries Sir Bard,
I was oblig'd. To save my virtue! Lard!
A woman is her own sufficient guard.
For, spite of all the strength which men rely in,
We very rarely fall——without complying.
Some modern bards, to please you better skill'd,
Had, without scruple, the whole thing fulfill'd;
Had sent us off together, and left you in
A sad suspence, to guess what we are doing;
Then fans had hid the virtuous ladies' faces,
And cuckolds' hats had shelter'd their grimaces.
But ours, forsooth, will argue that the stage
Was meant t'improve, and not debauch the age.
Pshaw! to improve!—the stage was first design'd,
Such as they are, to represent mankind.
And, since a poet ought to copy nature,
A cuckold, sure, were not so strange a creature.
Well, tho' our poet's very modest muse
Cou'd, to my wish, so small a thing refuse,
Critics, to damn him, sure, will be so civil—
That's ne'er refused by critics—or the devil.

But shou'd we both act parts so very strange,
And, tho' I ask, shou'd you refuse revenge;
Oh! may this curse alone attend your lives!
May ye have all Bellarias to your wives!

SUNG BY MISS THORNOWETS, IN THE SECOND ACT.

I.

LIKE the whig and the tory
  Are prude and coquette;
From love these seek glory,
  As those do from state.
No prude or coquette
  My vows shall attend,
No tory I'll get,
  No whig for a friend.

II.

The man who by reason
  His life doth support,
Ne'er rises to treason,
  Ne'er sinks to a court.
By virtue, not party,
  Does actions commend;
My soul shall be hearty
  Towards such a friend.

III.

The woman who prizes
  No fool's empty praise;
Who censure despises,
  Yet virtue obeys;
With innocence airy,
  With gaiety wise,
In everything wary,
  In nothing precise:

IV.

When truth she discovers,
She ceases disdain;
Nor hunts after lovers,
To give only pain.
So lovely a creature,
To worlds I'd prefer;
Of bountiful Nature
Ask nothing but her.

SUNG IN THE THIRD ACT, BY THE SAME PERSON.

I.

VAIN, Belinda, are your wiles,
Vain are all your artful smiles,
While, like a bully, you invite,
And then decline th' approaching fight.

II.

Various are the little arts,
Which you use to conquer hearts;
By empty threats he would affright,
And you, by empty hopes, delight.

III.

Cowards may by him be brav'd;
Fops may be by you enslav'd;
Men wou'd he vanquish, or you bind,
He must be brave, and you be kind.

THE

AUTHOR'S FARCE;

WITH A

PUPPET-SHOW,

CALLED THE

PLEASURES OF THE TOWN.

First acted at the Haymarket in 1729, and revived some years after at Drury Lane, when it was revised, and greatly altered by the AUTHOR, as now printed.

——————— Quis iniqua
Tam patiens urbis, tam ferreus, ut teneat se?

Juv. Sat. 1.

PROLOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MR. JONES.

Too long the Tragic Muse hath aw'd the stage,
And fright'ned wives and children with her rage.
Too long Drawcansir roars, Parthenope weeps,
While ev'ry lady cries, and critic sleeps.
With ghosts, rapes, murders, tender hearts they wound,
Or else, like thunder, terrify with sound.
When the skill'd actress to her weeping eyes,
With artful sigh, the handkerchief applies,
How griev'd each sympathising nymph appears!
And box and gallery both melt in tears.
Or when, in armour of Corinthian brass,
Heroic actor stares you in the face,
And cries aloud with emphasis that's fit, on
Liberty, freedom, liberty and Briton!
While frowning, gaping for applause he stands,
What generous Briton can refuse his hands?
Like the tame animals design'd for show,
You have your cues to clap, as they to bow;
Taught to commend, your judgments have no share;
By chance you guess aright, by chance you err.

But handkerchiefs and Britain laid aside,
To-night we mean to laugh, and not to chide.

In days of yore, when fools were held in fashion,
Tho' now, alas! all banish'd from the nation,
A merry jester had reform'd his lord,
Who wou'd have scorn'd the sterner Stoic's word.

PROLOGUE.

Bred in Democritus his laughing schools,
Our Author flies sad Heraclitus' rules:
No tears, no terror plead in his behalf;
The aim of Farce is but to make you laugh.
Beneath the tragic or the comic name,
Farces and puppet-shows ne'er miss of fame.
Since then, in borrow'd dress, they've pleas'd the town,
Condemn them not, appearing in their own.

Smiles we expect from the good natur'd few
As ye are done by, ye malicious, do;
And kindly laugh at him, who laughs at you.

PERSONS IN THE FARCE.

MEN.

Luckless, the Author and Master of the Show,	MR. MULLART.
Witmore, his friend,	MR. LACY.
Marplay, sen. } Comedians,	MR. REYNOLDS.
Marplay, jun. } Comedians,	MR. STOPLER.
Bookweight, a Bookseller,	MR. JONES.
Scarecrow, } Scribblers,	MR. MARSHAL.
Dash, } Scribblers,	MR. HALLAM.
Quibble, } Scribblers,	MR. DOVE.
Blotpage, } Scribblers,	MR. WELLS, JUN.
Index,	———
Jack, Servant to Luckless,	MR. ACHURCH.
Jack-pudding,	MR. REYNOLDS.
Bantomite,	MR. MARSHAL.

WOMEN.

Mrs. Moneywood, the Author's Landlady,	MRS. MULLART.
Harriot, her Daughter,	MISS PALMS.

PERSONS IN THE PUPPET-SHOW.

Player,	MR. DOVE.
Constable,	MR. WELLS.
Murdertext, a Presbyterian Parson,	MR. HALLAM.
Goddess of Nonsense,	MRS. MULLART.
Charon,	MR. AYRES.
Curry, a Bookseller,	MR. DOVE.
A Poet,	MR. W. HALLAM.
Signior Opera,	MR. STOPLER.
Don Tragedio,	MR. MARSHAL.
Sir Farcical Comic,	MR. DAVENPORT.
Dr. Orator,	MR. JONES.
Monsieur Pantomime,	MR. KNOTT.
Mrs. Novel,	MRS. MARTIN.
Robgrave, the Sexton,	MR. HARRIS.
Sailor,	MR. ACHURCH.
Somebody,	MR. HARRIS, JUN.
Nobody,	MR. WELLS, JUN.
Punch,	MR. REYNOLDS.
Joan,	MR. HICKS.
Lady Kingcall,	MISS CLARKE.
Mrs. Cheat'em,	MRS. WIND.
Mrs. Glassring,	MRS. BLUNT.
Count Ugly,	———

THE

AUTHOR'S FARCE.

ACT I. SCENE I.

SCENE, LUCKLESS'S *Room in* MRS. MONEYWOOD'S *House.*

MRS. MONEYWOOD, HARRIOT, LUCKLESS.

MONEYWOOD.

NEVER tell me, Mr. Luckless, of your play, and your play. I tell you, I must be paid. I would no more depend on a benefit-night of an unacted play, than I would on a benefit-ticket in an undrawn lottery. Cou'd I have guess'd that I had a poet in my house! Cou'd I have look'd for a poet under lac'd clothes!

Luck. Why not? since you may often find poverty under them: nay, they are commonly the signs of it. And, therefore, why may not a poet be seen in them as well as a courtier?

Money. Do you make a jest of my misfortune, Sir?

Luck. Rather my misfortune. I am sure I have a better title to poverty than you; for, notwithstanding the handsome figure I make, unless you are so good to invite me, I am afraid I shall scarce prevail on my stomach to dine to-day.

Money. O never fear that: you will never want a

dinner, till you have dined at all the eating-houses round.——No one shuts their doors against you the first time; and I think you are so kind seldom to trouble them a second.

Luck. No.——And if you will give me leave to walk out of your doors, the devil take me if ever I come into 'em again.

Money. Pay me, Sir, what you owe me, and walk away whenever you please.

Luck. With all my heart, Madam; get me a pen and ink, and I'll give you my note for it immediately.

Money. Your note! who will discount it? Not your bookseller; for he has as many of your notes as he has of your works; both good lasting ware, and which are never likely to go out of his shop and his scrutoire.

Har. Nay, but, Madam, 'tis barbarous to insult him in this manner.

Money. No doubt you'll take his part. Pray get you about your business. I suppose he intends to pay me by ruining you. Get you in this instant: and remember, if ever I see you with him again, I'll turn you out of doors.

SCENE II.

LUCKLESS, MRS. MONEYWOOD.

Luck. Discharge all your ill-nature on me, Madam, but spare poor Miss Harriot.

Money. Oh! then it is plain. I have suspected your familiarity a long while. You are a base man. Is it not enough to stay three months in my house without paying me a farthing, but you must ruin my child?

Luck. I love her as my soul. Had I the world I'd give it her all.

Money. But, as you happen to have nothing in the world, I desire you wou'd have nothing to say to her. I suppose you wou'd have settled all your castles in the air. Oh! I wish you had liv'd in one of them, instead of my house. Well, I am resolv'd, when you have gone away (which I heartily hope will be very soon) I'll hang over my door in great red letters, 'No Lodgings for Poets.'—Sure never was such a guest as you have been. My floor is all spoil'd with ink, my windows with verses, and my door has been almost beat down with duns.

Luck. Would your house had been beaten down, and every thing but my dear Harriot crush'd under it.

Money. Sir, Sir——

Luck. Madam, Madam! I will attack you at your own weapons; I will pay you in your own coin.

Money. I wish you'd pay me in any coin, Sir.

Luck. Look ye, Madam, I'll do as much as a reasonable woman can require; I'll show you all I have: and give you all I have too, if you please to accept it.

[*Turns his pockets inside out.*

Money. I will not be us'd in this manner. No, Sir, I will be paid, if there be any such thing as law.

Luck. By what law you will put money into my pocket I know not; for I never heard of any one who got money by the law, but the lawyers. I have told you already, and I tell you again, that the first money I get shall be yours; and I have great expectations from my play. In the mean time, your staying here can be of no service, and you may possibly drive some fine thoughts out of my head. I wou'd write a love-scene, and your daughter wou'd be more proper company, on that occasion, than you.

Money. You wou'd act a love-scene, I believe; but I shall prevent you; for I intend to dispose of myself before my daughter.

Luck. Dispose of yourself!

Money. Yes, Sir, dispose of myself——'Tis very well known that I have had very good offers since my last dear husband died. I might have had an attorney of New-Inn, or Mr. Filpot the exciseman; yes, I had my choice of two parsons, or a doctor of physic; and yet I slighted them all: yes, I slighted them for—for—for you.

Luck. For me!

Money. Yes, you have seen too visible marks of my passion; too visible for my reputation. [*Sobbing.*

Luck. I have heard very loud tokens of your passion; but I rather took it for the passion of anger than of love.

Money. O! it was love, indeed. Nothing but love, upon my soul.

Luck. The devil! This way of dunning is worse than the other.

Money. If thou can'st not pay me in money, let me have it in love. If I break through the modesty of my sex, let my passion excuse it.——I know the world will call it an impudent action; but if you will let me reserve all I have to myself, I will make myself yours for ever.

Luck. Toll, loll, loll!

Money. And is this the manner you receive my declaration, you poor beggarly fellow? You shall repent this; remember you shall repent it, remember that. I'll shew you the revenge of an injur'd woman.

Luck. I shall never repent any thing that rids me of you, I am sure.

SCENE III.

LUCKLESS, HARRIOT.

Luck. Dear Harriot!

Har. I have waited an opportunity to return to you.

Luck. Oh! my dear, I am so sick!

Har. What's the matter?

Luck. Oh! your mother! your mother!

Har. What, has she been scolding ever since?

Luck. Worse! Worse!

Har. Heav'n forbid she should threaten to go to law with you.

Luck. Oh, worse! worse! she threatens to go to church with me. She has made me a generous offer, that if I willbut marry her, she will suffer me to settle all she has upon her.

Har. Generous creature! Sure you will not resist the proposal?

Luck. Hum! what would you advise me to?

Har. Oh, take her, take her, by all means; you will be the prettiest, finest, loveliest, sweetest couple—Auh! what a delicate dish of matrimony you will make? Her age with your youth, her avarice with your extravagance, and her scolding with your poetry.

Luck. Nay, but I am serious, and I desire you wou'd be so. You know my unhappy circumstances, and your mother's wealth. It would be at least a prudent match.

Har. Oh! extremely prudent, ha, ha, ha! the world will say, Lard! who could have thought Mr. Luckless had had so much prudence? This one action will overbalance all the follies of your life.

Luck. Faith, I think it will: but, dear Harriot, how can I think of losing you for ever? And yet, as our affairs stand, I see no possibility of our being happy together. It will be some pleasure, too, that I may have it in my power to serve you. Believe me it is with the utmost reluctance I think of parting with you. For if it was in my power to have you—

Har. Oh, I am very much oblig'd to you—I believe you—Yes, you need not swear, I believe you.

Luck. And can you as easily consult prudence, and part with me? for I wou'd not buy my own happiness at the price of yours.

Har. I thank you, Sir——Part with you——intolerable vanity!

Luck. Then I am resolv'd; and so, my good landlady have at you.

Har. Stay, Sir, let me acquaint you with one thing; you are a villain! and don't think I'm vex'd at any thing, but that I should have been such a fool as ever to have had a good opinion of you. [*Crying.*

Luck. Ha, ha, ha! caught by Jupiter! And did my dear Harriot think me in earnest?

Har. And was you not in earnest?

Luck. What, to part with thee? A pretty woman will be sooner in earnest to part with her beauty, or a great man with his power.

Har. I wish I were assur'd of the sincerity of your love.

AIR. *Butter'd Pease.*

Luck. Does my dearest Harriot ask
What for love I wou'd pursue?
Wou'd you, charmer, know what task
I wou'd undertake for you?

Ask the bold ambitious, what
  He for honours wou'd atchieve?
Or the gay voluptuous, that
  Which he'd not for pleasure give?

Ask the miser what he'd do
  To amass excessive gain;
Or the saint, what he'd pursue,
  His wish'd Heaven to obtain.

These I wou'd attempt, and more:
  For Oh! my Harriot is to me,
All ambition, pleasure, store,
  Or what Heav'n itself can be.

Har. Wou'd my dearest Luckless know
  What his constant Harriot can,
Her tender love and faith to show,
  For her dear, her only man.

Ask the vain coquette, what she
  For men's adoration wou'd;
Or, from censure to be free,
  Ask the vile censorious prude.

In a coach and six to ride,
  What the mercenary jade,
Or the widow to be bride
  To a brisk broad-shoulder'd blade.

All these I wou'd attempt for thee,
  Cou'd I but thy passion fix;
Thy will, my sole commander be,
  And thy arms my coach and six.

Money. [*within.*] Harriot, Harriot.

Har. Hear the dreadful summons, adieu. I will take the first opportunity of seeing you again.

Luck. Adieu, my pretty charmer; go thy ways for the first of thy sex.

SCENE IV.

LUCKLESS, JACK.

Luck. So! what news bring you?

Jack. An't please your honour I have been at my lord's; and his lordship thanks you for the favour you have offer'd of reading your play to him; but he has such a prodigious deal of business, he begs to be excus'd. I have been with Mr. Keyber too: he made me no answer at all. Mr. Bookweight will be here immediately.

Luck. Jack.

Jack. Sir.

Luck. Fetch my other hat hither. Carry it to the pawnbroker's.

Jack. To your honour's own pawnbroker!

Luck. Ay—and, in thy way home, call at the cook's shop. So, one way or other, I find my head must always provide for my belly.

SCENE V.

LUCKLESS, WITMORE.

Luck. I am surprised! dear Witmore!

Wit. Dear Harry!

Luck. This is kind, indeed; but I do not more wonder at finding a man in this age, who can be a friend to adversity, than that fortune should be so much my

friend as to direct you to me; for she is a lady I have not been much indebted to lately.

Wit. She, who told me, I assure you, is one you have been indebted to a long while.

Luck. Whom do you mean?

Wit. One who complains of your unkindness in not visiting her; Mrs. Lovewood.

Luck. Dost thou visit there still, then?

Wit. I throw an idle hour away there sometimes. When I am in an ill-humour I am sure of feeding it there with all the scandal in town; for no bawd is half so diligent in looking after girls with an uncrack'd maidenhead as she in searching out women with crack'd reputations.

Luck. The much more infamous office of the two.

Wit. Thou art still a favourer of the women, I find.

Luck. Ay, the women and the muses; the high roads to beggary.

Wit. What, art thou not cur'd of scribbling yet?

Luck. No, scribbling is as impossible to cure as the gout.

Wit. And as sure a sign of poverty as the gout of riches. 'Sdeath! in an age of learning and true politeness, where a man might succeed by his wit, there would be some encouragement. But now, when party and prejudice carry all before them; when learning is decried, wit not understood; when the theatres are puppet-shows, and the comedians ballad-singers; when fools lead the town, wou'd a man think to thrive by his wit? If you must write, write nonsense, write operas, write Hurlothrumbos, set up an oratory and preach nonsense, and you may meet with encouragement enough. Be profane, be scurrilous, be immodest; if you wou'd receive applause, deserve to receive sentence at the Old Bailey; and if you wou'd ride in a coach, deserve to ride in a cart.

Luck. You are warm, my friend.

Wit. It is because I am your friend. I cannot bear to hear the man I love ridiculed by fools, by idiots.—To hear a fellow, who, had he been born a Chinese, had starv'd for want of genius to have been even the lowest mechanic, toss up his empty noddle with an affected disdain of what he has not understood; and women abusing what they have neither seen nor read, from an unreasonable prejudice to an honest fellow, whom they have not known. If thou wilt write against all these reasons, get a patron, be pimp to some worthless man of quality, write panegyrics on him, flatter him with as many virtues as he has vices. Then, perhaps, you will engage his lordship, his lordship engages the town on your side, and then write till your arms ache, sense or nonsense, it will all go down.

Luck. Thou art too satirical on mankind. It is possible to thrive in the world by justifiable means.

Wit. Ay, justifiable, and so they are justifiable by custom. What does the soldier or physician thrive by, but slaughter? The lawyer, but by quarrels? The courtier, but by taxes? The poet, but by flattery? I know none that thrive by profiting mankind, but the husbandman and the merchant: the one gives you the fruit of your own soil, the other brings you those from abroad; and yet these are represented as mean and mechanical, and the others as honourable and glorious.

Luck. Well, but prithee leave railing, and tell me what you wou'd advise me to do.

Wit. Do! why thou art a vigorous young fellow, and there are rich widows in town.

Luck. But I am already engaged.

Wit. Why don't you marry then——for I suppose you are not mad enough to have any engagements with a poor mistress?

Luck. Even so, faith, and so heartily that I wou'd not change her for the widow of a Crœsus.

Wit. Now thou art undone, indeed. Matrimony clenches ruin beyond retrieval. What unfortunate stars wert thou born under! Was it not enough to follow those nine ragged jades the muses, but you must fasten on some earth-born mistress as poor as them?

Mar. jun. [*within.*] Order my chairmen to call on me at St. James's.——No, let them stay.

Wit. Heyday, whom the devil have we here?

Luck. The young captain, Sir; no less a person, I assure you.

SCENE VI.

LUCKLESS, WITMORE, MARPLAY, JUN.

Mar. jun. Mr. Luckless, I kiss your hands——Sir, I am your most obedient humble servant; you see, Mr. Luckless, what power you have over me. I attend your commands, tho' several persons of quality have staid at court for me above this hour.

Luck. I am obliged to you—I have a tragedy for your house, Mr. Marplay.

Mar. jun. Ha! if you will send it to me, I will give you my opinion of it; and if I can make any alterations in it that will be for its advantage, I will do it freely.

Wit. Alterations, Sir?

Mar. jun. Yes, Sir, alterations—I will maintain it, let a play be never so good, without alteration it will do nothing.

Wit. Very odd, indeed.

Mar. jun. Did you ever write, Sir?

Wit. No, Sir, I thank heaven.

Mar. jun. Oh! your humble servant—your very

humble servant, Sir. When you write yourself, you will find the necessity of alterations. Why, Sir, wou'd you guess that I had altered Shakespeare?

Wit. Yes, faith, Sir, no one sooner.

Mar. jun. Alack-a-day! Was you to see the plays when they are brought to us, a parcel of crude undigested stuff. We are the persons, Sir, who lick them into form, that mould them into shape—The poet make the play indeed! the colourman might be as well said to make the picture, or the weaver, the coat: my father and I, Sir, are a couple of poetical tailors: when a play is brought us, we consider it as a tailor does his coat; we cut it, Sir, we cut it; and let me tell you, we have the exact measure of the town; we know how to fit their taste. The poets, between you and me, are a pack of ignorant——

Wit. Hold, hold, Sir. This is not quite so civil to Mr. Luckless; besides, as I take it, you have done the town the honour of writing yourself.

Mar. jun. Sir, you are a man of sense, and express yourself well. I did, as you say, once make a small sally into Parnassus, took a sort of flying leap over Helicon: but if ever they catch me there again—Sir, the town have a prejudice to my family; for if any play cou'd have made them ashamed to damn it, mine must. It was all over plot. It wou'd have made half-a-dozen novels: nor was it cramm'd with a pack of wit-traps, like Congreve and Wycherly, where every one knows when the joke was coming. I defy the sharpest critic of them all to have known when any jokes of mine were coming. The dialogue was plain, easy, and natural, and not one single joke in it from the beginning to the end: besides, Sir, there was one scene of tender melancholy conversation, enough to have melted a heart of stone: and yet they damn'd it:

and they damn'd themselves; for they shall have no more of mine.

Wit. Take pity on the town, Sir.

Mar. jun. I! no, Sir, no. I'll write no more. No more; unless I am forc'd to it.

Luck. That's no easy thing, Marplay.

Mar. jun. Yes, Sir. Odes, odes, a man may be oblig'd to write those you know.

Luck. }
Wit. } Ha, ha, ha! that's true indeed.

Luck. But about my tragedy, Mr. Marplay?

Mar. jun. I believe my father is at the playhouse: if you please we will read it now; but I must call on a young lady first——Hey, who's there? Is my footman there? Order my chair to the door—Your servant, gentlemen——*Caro vien.* [*Exit singing.*

Wit. This is the most finish'd gentleman I ever saw, and has not, I dare swear, his equal.

Luck. If he has; here he comes.

SCENE VII.

LUCKLESS, WITMORE, BOOKWEIGHT.

Luck. Mr. Bookweight, your very humble servant.

Book. I was told, Sir, that you had particular business with me.

Luck. Yes, Mr. Bookweight; I have something to put into your hands. I have a play for you, Mr Bookweight.

Book. Is it accepted, Sir?

Luck. Not yet.

Book. Oh! Sir, when it is, it will be then time enough to talk about it. A play, like a bill, is of no value till it is accepted: nor indeed when it is, very often

Besides, Sir, our playhouses are grown so plenty, and our actors so scarce, that really plays are become very bad commodities. But pray, Sir, do you offer it to the players or the patentees?

Luck. Oh! to the players, certainly.

Book. You are in the right of that: but a play which will do on the stage, will not always do for us; there are your acting plays, and your reading plays.

Wit. I do not understand that distinction.

Book. Why, Sir, your acting play is entirely supported by the merit of the actor; in which case, it signifies very little whether there be any sense in it or no. Now, your reading play is of a different stamp, and must have wit and meaning in it. These latter I call your substantive, as being able to support themselves. The former are your adjective, as what require the buffoonry and gestures of an actor to be join'd with them, to shew their signification.

Wit. Very learnedly defined truly.

Luck. Well, but, Mr. Bookweight, will you advance fifty guineas on my play?

Book. Fifty guineas! Yes, Sir. You shall have them with all my heart, if you will give me security for them. Fifty guineas for a play! Sir, I wou'd not give fifty shillings.

Luck. 'Sdeath, Sir! do you beat me down at this rate?

Book. No, nor fifty farthings. Fifty guineas! Indeed your name is well worth that.

Luck. Jack, take this worthy gentleman, and kick him down stairs.

Book. Sir, I shall make you repent this.

Jack. Come, Sir, will you please to brush?

Book. Help! murder! I'll have the law of you, Sir.

Luck. Ha, ha, ha!

SCENE VIII.

LUCKLESS, WITMORE, MRS. MONEYWOOD.

Money. What noise is this? It is a very fine thing truly, Mr. Luckless, that you will make these uproars in my house.

Luck. If you dislike it, it is in your power to drown a much greater. Do you but speak, Madam, and I am sure no one will be heard but yourself.

Money. Very well, indeed! fine reflections on my character! Sir, Sir, all the neighbours know that I have been as quiet a woman as ever liv'd in the parish. I had no noises in my house till you came. We were the family of love. But you have been a nuisance to the whole neighbourhood. While you had money, my doors were thundered at every morning at four and five by coachmen and chairmen; and, since you have had none, my house has been besieged all day by creditors and bailiffs: then there's the rascal your man; but I will pay the dog, I will scour him.——Sir, I am glad you are a witness of his abuses of me.

Wit. I am indeed, Madam, a witness how unjustly he has abus'd you. [Jack *whispers* Luckless.

Luck. Witmore, excuse me a moment.

SCENE IX.

MRS. MONEYWOOD, WITMORE.

Money. Yes, Sir; and, Sir, a man that has never shewn one the colour of his money.

Wit. Very hard, truly: how much may he be in your debt, pray? Because he has order'd me to pay you.

Money. Ay! Sir, I wish he had.

Wit. I am serious, I assure you.

Money. I am very glad to hear it, Sir. Here is the bill as we settled it this very morning. I always thought, indeed, Mr. Luckless had a great deal of honesty in his principles; any man may be unfortunate: but I knew when he had money I shou'd have it; and what signifies dunning a man when he hath it not? Now that is a way with some people which I could never come into.

Wit. There, Madam, is your money. You may give Mr. Luckless the receipt.

Money. Sir, I give you both a great many thanks. I am sure it is almost as charitable as if you gave it me; for I am to make up a sum to-morrow morning. Well, if Mr. Luckless was but a little soberer I should like him for a lodger exceedingly; for I must say, I think him a very pleasant good-humour'd man.

SCENE X.

LUCKLESS, WITMORE, MONEYWOOD.

Luck. Those are words I never heard out of that mouth before.

Money. Ha, ha, ha! you are pleas'd to be merry, ha, ha!

Luck. Why, Witmore, thou hast the faculty opposite to that of a witch, and canst lay a tempest. I shou'd as soon have imagin'd one man cou'd have stopt a cannon-ball in its full force as her tongue.

Money. Ha, ha, ha! he is the best company in the world, Sir, and so full of his similitudes.

Wit. Luckless, good morrow: I shall see you soon again.

Luck. Let it be soon, I beseech you; for thou hast brought a calm into this house that was scarce ever in it before.

SCENE XI.

LUCKLESS, MRS. MONEYWOOD, JACK.

Money. Well, Mr. Luckless, you are a comical man, to give one such a character to a stranger.

Luck. The company is gone, Madam: and now, like true man and wife, we may fall to abusing one another as fast as we please.

Money. Abuse me as you please, so you pay me, Sir.

Luck. 'Sdeath! Madam, I will pay you.

Money. Nay, Sir, I do not ask it before it is due. I don't question your payment at all: if you was to stay in my house this quarter of a year, as I hope you will, I shou'd not ask you for a farthing.

Luck. Toll, loll, loll. But I shall have her begin with her passion immediately; and I had rather be the object of her rage for a year than of her love for half an hour.

Money. But why did you choose to surprise me with my money? Why did you not tell me you wou'd pay me?

Luck. Why, have I not told you?

Money. Yes, you told me of a play, and stuff: but you never told me you wou'd order a gentleman to pay me. A sweet, pretty, good-humour'd gentleman he is, heav'n bless him. Well, you have comical ways with you: but you have honesty at the bottom, and I'm

sure the gentleman himself will own I gave you that character.

Luck. Oh! I smell you now.—You see, Madam, I am better than my word to you: did he pay it you in gold or silver?

Money. All pure gold.

Luck. I have a vast deal of silver, which he brought me, within; will you do me the favour of taking it in silver? that will be of use to you in the shop too.

Money. Any thing to oblige you, Sir.

Luck. Jack, bring out the great bag, number One. Please to tell the money, Madam, on that table.

Money. It's easily told; heav'n knows there's not so much on't.

Jack. Sir, the bag is so heavy, I cannot bring it in.

Luck. Why, then, come and help to thrust a heavier bag out.

Money. What do you mean?

Luck. Only to pay you in my bed-chamber.

Money. Villain, dog, I'll swear a robbery, and have you hang'd: rogues, villains!

Luck. Be as noisy as you please—[*Shuts the door.*] Jack, call a coach; and d'ye hear, get up behind it and attend me.

ACT II. SCENE I.

The Playhouse.

LUCKLESS, MARPLAY, SENIOR, MARPLAY, JUNIOR.

LUCKLESS. [*Reads.*]

'THEN hence my sorrow, hence my ev'ry fear;
'No matter where, so we are bless'd together.

'With thee, the barren rocks, where not one step
'Of human race lies printed in the snow,
'Look lovely as the smiling infant spring.'

Mar. sen. Augh! will you please to read that again, Sir?

Luck. 'Then hence my sorrow, hence my ev'ry fear.'

Mar. sen. 'Then hence my sorrow'—Horror is a much better word.—And then in the second line—'No matter where, so we are bless'd together'—Undoubtedly, it should be,—No matter where, so somewhere we're together. Where is the question, somewhere is the answer—Read on, Sir.

Luck. 'With thee,' &c.

Mar. sen. No, no, I cou'd alter those lines to a much better idea.

'With thee, the barren blocks, where not a bit
'Of human face is painted on the bark,
'Look green as Covent-Garden in the spring.'

Luck. Green as Covent-Garden!

Mar. jun. Yes, yes; Covent-Garden market, where they sell greens.

Luck. Monstrous!

Mar. sen. Pray, Sir, read on.

Luck. 'Leandra. Oh, my Harmonio, I cou'd hear thee
'still;
'The nightingale to thee sings out of tune,
'While on thy faithful breast my head reclines,
'The downy pillow's hard; while from thy lips
'I drink delicious draughts of nectar down,
'Falernian wines seem bitter to my taste.'

Mar. jun. Here's meat, drink, singing, and lodging, egad.

Luck. He answers.

Mar. jun. But, Sir——

Luck. 'Oh, let me pull thee, press thee to my heart,

'Thou rising spring of everlasting sweets;
'Take notice, Fortune, I forgive thee all,
'Thou'st made Leandra mine; thou flood of joy
'Mix with my soul, and rush thro' ev'ry vein.'

Mar. sen. Those two last lines, again, if you please.

Luck. 'Thou'st made,' &c.

Mar. jun. '————Thou flood of joy
'Mix with my soul, and rush thro' ev'ry vein.'

Those are two excellent lines indeed: I never writ better myself: but, Sar——

Luck. 'Leandra's mine, go bid the tongue of fate
'Pronounce another word of bliss like that;
'Search thro' the eastern mines and golden shores,
'Where lavish nature pours forth all her stores;
'For to my lot cou'd all her treasures fall,
'I wou'd not change Leandra for them all.'

There ends act the first, and such an act as, I believe, never was on this stage yet.

Mar. jun. Nor never will, I hope.

Mar. sen. Pray, Sir, let me look at one thing.

'Falernian wines seem bitter to my taste.'

Pray, Sir, what sort of wines may your Falernian be? for I never heard of them before; and I am sure, as I keep the best company, if there had been such sort of wines, I should have tasted them. Tokay I have drank, and Lacrimæ I have drank, but what your Falernian is, the devil take me if I can tell.

Mar. jun. I fancy, father, these wines grow at the top of Parnassus.

Luck. Do they so, Mr. Pert? why then I fancy you have never tasted them.

Mar. sen. Suppose you should say, The wines of Cape are bitter to my taste.

Luck. Sir, I cannot alter it.

Mar. sen. Nor we cannot act it. It won't do, Sir,

and so you need give yourself no farther trouble about it.

Luck. What particular fault do you find?

Mar. jun. Sar, there's nothing that touches me, nothing that is coercive to my passions.

Luck. Fare you well, Sir: may another play be coercive to your passions.

SCENE II.

MARPLAY, SENIOR, MARPLAY, JUNIOR.

Mar. sen. Ha, ha, ha!

Mar. jun. What do you think of the play?

Mar. sen. It may be a very good one, for ought I know: but I am resolv'd since the town will not receive any of mine, they shall have none from any other. I'll keep them to their old diet.

Mar. jun. But suppose they won't feed on't?

Mar. sen. Then it shall be cramm'd down their throats.

Mar. jun. I wish, father, you wou'd leave me that art for a legacy, since I am afraid I am like to have no other from you.

Mar. sen. 'Tis buff, child, 'tis buff—true Corinthian brass; and heav'n be prais'd, tho' I have giv'n thee no gold, I have given thee enough of that, which is the better inheritance of the two. Gold thou might'st have spent, but this is a lasting estate that will stick by thee all thy life.

Mar. jun. What shall be done with that farce which was damn'd last night?

Mar. sen. Give it them again to-morrow I have told some persons of quality that it is a good thing, and I am resolv'd not to be in the wrong: let us see which

will be weary first, the town of damning, or we of being damn'd.

Mar. jun. Rat the town, I say.

Mar. sen. That's a good boy; and so say I: but prithee, what didst thou do with the comedy, which I gave thee t'other day, that I thought a good one?

Mar. jun. Did as you order'd me, return'd it to the author, and told him it wou'd not do.

Mar. sen. You did well. If thou writest thyself, and that I know thou art very qualified to do, it is thy interest to keep back all other authors of any merit, and be as forward to advance those of none.

Mar. jun. But I am a little afraid of writing; for my writings, you know, have far'd but ill hitherto.

Mar. sen. That is because thou hast a little mistaken the method of writing. The art of writing, boy, is the art of stealing old plays, by changing the name of the play, the new ones, by changing the name of the author.

Mar. jun. If it was not for these cursed hisses and catcalls.

Mar. sen. Harmless music, child, very harmless music, and what, when one is well seasoned to it, has no effect at all: for my part, I have been used to them.

Mar. jun. Ay, and I have been used to them too, for that matter.

Mar. sen. And stood them bravely too. Idle young actors are fond of applause, but, take my word for it, a clap is a mighty silly, empty thing, and does no more good than a hiss; and therefore, if any man loves hissing, he may have his three shillings worth at me whenever he pleases. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

SCENE, *a Room in* BOOKWEIGHT'S *House.*

DASH, BLOTPAGE, QUIBBLE, *writing at several Tables.*

Dash. Pox on't, I'm as dull as an ox, tho' I have not a bit of one within me. I have not dined these two days, and yet my head is as heavy as any alderman's or lord's. I carry about me symbols of all the elements; my head is as heavy as water, my pockets are as light as air, my appetite is as hot as fire, and my coat is as dirty as earth.

Blot. Lend me your Bysche, Mr. Dash, I want a rhyme for wind.

Dash. Why there's blind, and kind, and behind, and find, and mind: it is of the easiest termination imaginable; I have had it four times in a page.

Blot. None of those words will do.

Dash. Why then you may use any that end in ond, or and, or end. I am never so exact, if the two last letters are alike, it will do very well. Read the verse.

Blot. 'Inconstant as the seas, or as the wind.'

Dash. What wou'd you express in the next line?

Blot. Nay, that I don't know, for the sense is out already. I would say something about inconstancy.

Dash. I can lend you a verse, and it will do very well too.

'Inconstancy will never have an end.'

End rhimes very well with Wind.

Blot. It will do well enough for the middle of a poem.

Dash. Ay, ay, any thing will do well enough for

the middle of a poem. If you can but get twenty good lines to place at the beginning for a taste, it will sell very well.

Quib. So that, according to you, Mr. Dash, a poet acts pretty much on the same principles with an oyster-woman.

Dash. Pox take your simile, it has set my chaps a watering: but come, let us leave off work for a while, and hear Mr. Quibble's song.

Quib. My pipes are pure and clear, and my stomach is as hollow as any trumpet in Europe.

Dash. Come, the song.

SONG.

AIR. *Ye Commons and Peers.*

How unhappy's the fate
To live by one's pate,
And be forc'd to write hackney for bread.
An author's a joke,
To all manner of folk,
Wherever he pops up his head, his head,
Wherever he pops up his head.

Tho' he mount on that hack,
Old Pegasus' back,
And of Helicon drink till he burst,
Yet a curse of those streams,
Poetical dreams,
They never can quench one's thirst, &c.

Ah! how shou'd he fly
On fancy so high,
When his limbs are in durance and hold?

Or how shou'd he charm,
With genius so warm,
When his poor nak'd body's a cold, &c.

SCENE IV.

BOOKWEIGHT, DASH, QUIBBLE, BLOTPAGE.

Book. Fie upon it, gentlemen! what, not at your pens? Do you consider, Mr. Quibble, that it is a fortnight since your letter to a Friend in the Country was published? Is it not high time for an Answer to come out? At this rate, before your Answer is printed, your Letter will be forgot. I love to keep a controversy up warm. I have had authors who have writ a pamphlet in the morning, answer'd it in the afternoon, and answer'd that again at night.

Quib. Sir, I will be as expeditious as possible: but it is harder to write on this side the question, because it is the wrong side.

Book. Not a jot. So far on the contrary, that I have known some authors choose it as the properest to show their genius. But let me see what you have produc'd, —'With all deference to what that very learned and 'ingenious person, in his Letter to a Friend in the 'Country, hath advanced.' Very well, Sir; for besides that it may sell more of the Letter, all controversial writers should begin with complimenting their adversaries, as prize-fighters kiss before they engage. Let it be finish'd with all speed. Well, Mr. Dash, have you done that murder yet?

Dash. Yes, Sir, the murder is done; I am only about a few moral reflections to place before it.

Book. Very well: then let me have the ghost finished by this day se'nnight.

Dash. What sort of a ghost wou'd you have this? Sir, the last was a pale one.

Book. Then let this be a bloody one. Mr. Quibble, you may lay by that life which you are about; for I hear the person is recovered; and write me out proposals for delivering five sheets of Mr. Bailey's English Dictionary every week, till the whole be finished. If you do not know the form, you may copy the proposals for printing Bayle's Dictionary in the same manner. The same words will do for both.

Enter INDEX.

So, Mr. Index, what news with you?

Index. I have brought my bill, Sir.

Book. What's here? For fitting the motto of Risum teneatis Amici to a dozen pamphlets, at sixpence per each, six shillings——For Omnia vincit Amor, et nos cedamus Amori, sixpence—For Difficile est Satyram non scribere, sixpence—Hum! hum! hum! Sum total, for thirty-six Latin mottos, eighteen shillings; ditto English, one shilling and nine pence; ditto Greek, four, four shillings. These Greek mottos are excessively dear.

Ind. If you have them cheaper at either of the universities, I will give you mine for nothing.

Book. You shall have your money immediately; and pray remember that I must have two Latin seditious mottos, and one Greek moral motto for pamphlets by to-morrow morning.

Quib. I want two Latin sentences, Sir, one for page the fourth, in the praise of loyalty, and another for page the tenth, in praise of liberty and property.

Dash. The ghost wou'd become a motto very well, if you wou'd bestow one on him.

Book. Let me have them all.

Ind. Sir, I shall provide them. Be pleased to look on that, Sir, and print me five hundred proposals, and as many receipts.

Book. 'Proposals for printing by subscription a New 'Translation of Cicero Of the Nature of the Gods, and 'his Tusculan Questions, by Jeremy Index, Esq.' I am sorry you have undertaken this, for it prevents a design of mine.

Ind. Indeed, Sir, it does not; for you see all of the book that I ever intend to publish. It is only a handsome way of asking one's friends for a guinea.

Book. Then you have not translated a word of it, perhaps?

Ind. Not a single syllable.

Book. Well, you shall have your proposals forthwith; but I desire you wou'd be a little more reasonable in your bills for the future, or I shall deal with you no longer; for I have a certain fellow of a college, who offers to furnish me with second-hand mottos out of the Spectator for two-pence each.

Ind. Sir, I only desire to live by my goods, and I hope you will be pleas'd to allow some difference between a neat fresh piece, piping hot out of the Classics, and old thread-bare, worn-out stuff, that has past through every pedant's mouth, and been as common at the universities as their whores.

SCENE V.

BOOKWEIGHT, DASH, QUIBBLE, BLOTPAGE, SCARECROW.

Scare. Sir, I have brought you a libel against the ministry.

Book. Sir, I shall not take any thing against them;—for I have two in the press already. [*Aside.*

Scare. Then, Sir, I have an Apology in defence of them.

Book. That I shall not meddle with neither; they don't sell so well.

Scare. I have a translation of Virgil's Æneid, with notes on it, if we can agree about the price.

Book. Why, what price wou'd you have?

Scare. You shall read it first, otherwise how will you know the value?

Book. No, no, Sir, I never deal that way: a poem is a poem, and a pamphlet a pamphlet with me. Give me a good handsome large volume, with a full promising title-page at the head of it, printed on a good paper and letter, the whole well bound and gilt, and I'll warrant its selling——You have the common error of authors who think people buy books to read—No, no, books are only bought to furnish libraries, as pictures and glasses, and beds and chairs, are for other rooms. Look-ye, Sir, I don't like your title-page; however, to oblige a young beginner, I don't care if I do print it at my own expence.

Scare. But pray, Sir, at whose expence shall I eat?

Book. At whose? Why at mine, Sir, at mine. I am as great a friend to learning, as the Dutch are to trade: no one can want bread with me who will earn it; therefore, Sir, if you please to take your seat at my table, here will be every thing necessary provided for you: good milk-porridge, very often twice a day, which is good wholesome food, and proper for students: a translator too is what I want at present; my last being in Newgate for shop-lifting. The rogue had a trick of translating out of the shops, as well as the languages.

Scare. But I am afraid I am not qualified for a translator, for I understand no language but my own.

Book. What, and translate Virgil?

Scare. Alas! I translated him out of Dryden.

Book. Lay by your hat, Sir, lay by your hat, and take your seat immediately. Not qualified! thou art as well vers'd in thy trade, as if thou hadst labour'd in my garret these ten years. Let me tell you, friend, you will have more occasion for invention than learning here. You will be obliged to translate books out of all languages, especially French, that were never printed in any language whatsoever.

Scare. Your trade abounds in mysteries.

Book. The study of Bookselling is as difficult as the law: and there are as many tricks in the one as the other. Sometimes we give a foreign name to our own labours, and sometimes we put our names to the labours of others. Then as the lawyers have John-a-Nokes and Tom-a-Stiles, so we have Messieurs Moore near St. Paul's, and Smith near the Royal Exchange.

SCENE VI.

To them LUCKLESS.

Luck. Mr. Bookweight, your servant. Who can form to himself an idea more amiable than of a man at the head of so many patriots working for the benefit of their country.

Book. Truly, Sir, I believe it is an idea more agreeable to you than that of a gentleman in the Crown-office paying thirty or forty guineas for abusing an honest tradesman.

Luck. Pshaw! that was only jocosely done, and a man, who lives by wit, must not be angry at a jest.

Book. Look ye, Sir, if you have a mind to compromise the matter, and have brought me any money——

Luck. Hast thou been in thy trade so long, and talk of money to a modern author? You might as well have talk'd Latin or Greek to him. I have brought you paper, Sir.

Book. That is not bringing me money, I own. Have you brought me an opera?

Luck. You may call it an opera if you will, but I call it a puppet-show.

Book. A puppet-show!

Luck. Ay, a puppet-show, and is to be play'd this night at Drury-Lane playhouse.

Book. A puppet-show in a playhouse!

Luck. Ah, why what have been all the playhouses a long while but puppet-shows?

Book. Why, I don't know but it may succeed; at least if we can make out a tolerable good title-page: so, if you will walk in, if I can make a bargain with you I will: gentlemen, you may go to dinner.

SCENE VII.

Enter JACK-PUDDING, DRUMMER, MOB.

Jack-P. This is to give notice to all gentlemen, ladies, and others, that at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane, this evening, will be perform'd the whole puppet-show called the Pleasures of the Town; in which will be shewn the whole court of nonsense, with abundance of singing, dancing, and several other entertainments:—Also the comical and diverting humours of Some-body and No-body: Punch and his wife Joan, to be performed by figures; some of them six foot high. God save the King. [*Drum beats.*

SCENE VIII.

WITMORE *with a paper, meeting* LUCKLESS.

Wit. Oh! Luckless, I am overjoy'd to meet you: here, take this paper, and you will be discouraged from writing, I warrant you.

Luck. What is it?—Oh; one of my play-bills.

Wit. One of thy play-bills!

Luck. Even so——I have taken the advice you gave me this morning.

Wit. Explain.

Luck. Why, I had some time since given this performance of mine to be rehearsed, and the actors were all perfect in their parts; but we happen'd to differ about some particulars, and I had a design to have given it over; 'till having my play refus'd by Marplay, I sent for the managers of the other house in a passion, join'd issue with them, and this very evening it is to be acted.

Wit. Well, I wish you success.

Luck. Where are you going?

Wit. Any where but to hear you damn'd, which I must, was I to go to your Puppet-show.

Luck. Indulge me in this trial; and I assure thee, if it be successless, it shall be the last.

Wit. On that condition I will: but, shou'd the torrent run against you, I shall be a fashionable friend, and hiss with the rest.

Luck. No, a man who cou'd do so unfashionable and so generous a thing as Mr. Witmore did this morning——

Wit. Then I hope you will return it by never mentioning it to me more. I will now to the pit.

Luck. And I behind the scenes.

SCENE IX.

LUCKLESS, HARRIOT.

Luck. Dear Harriot!

Har. I was going to the playhouse to look after you. I am frighten'd out of my wits; I have left my mother at home with the strangest sort of man, who is inquiring after you: he has rais'd a mob before the door by the oddity of his appearance; his dress is like nothing I ever saw, and he talks of kings, and Bantam, and the strangest stuff.

Luck. What the devil can he be?

Har. One of your old acquaintance, I suppose, in disguise: one of his majesty's officers with his commission in his pocket, I warrant him.

Luck. Well, but have you your part perfect?

Har. I had, unless this fellow hath frighten'd it out of my head again: but I am afraid I shall play it wretchedly.

Luck. Why so?

Har. I shall never have assurance enough to go through with it, especially if they should hiss me.

Luck. O! your mask will keep you in countenance, and as for hissing, you need not fear it. The audience are generally so favourable to young beginners: but hist, here is your mother, and she has seen us. Adieu, my dear, make what haste you can to the playhouse.

[*Exit.*

SCENE X.

HARRIOT, MONEYWOOD.

Har. I wish I cou'd avoid her, for I suppose we shall have an alarm.

Money. So, so, very fine: always together, always caterwauling. How like a hangdog he stole off; and it's well for him he did, for I shou'd have rung such a peal in his ears——There's a friend of his at my house wou'd be very glad of his company, and I wish it was in my power to bring them together.

Har. You would not surely be so barbarous.

Money. Barbarous, ugh! You whining, puling fool! Hussy, you have not a drop of my blood in you. What, you are in love, I suppose?

Har. If I was, Madam, it wou'd be no crime.

Money. Yes, Madam, but it wou'd, and a folly too. No woman of sense was ever in love with anything but a man's pocket. What, I suppose he has fill'd your head with a pack of romantic stuff of streams and dreams, and charms and arms. I know this is the stuff they all run on with, and so run into our debts, and run away with our daughters.—Come, confess, are not you two to live in a wilderness together on love? Ah! thou fool! thou wilt find he will pay thee in love, just as he paid me in money. If thou wert resolved to go a begging, why did you not follow the camp? There, indeed, you might have carried a knapsack; but here you will have no knapsack to carry. There, indeed, you might have had a chance of burying half a score husbands in a campaign; whereas a poet is a long-liv'd animal: you have but one chance of burying him, and that is starving him.

Har. Well, Madam, and I would sooner starve with the man I love than ride in a coach and six with him I hate: and as for his passion, you will not make me suspect that, for he hath given me such proofs on't.

Money. Proofs! I shall die. Has he given you proofs of love?

Har. All that any modest woman can require.

Money. If he has given you all a modest woman can require, I am afraid he has given you more than a modest woman shou'd take: because he has been so good a lodger, I suppose I shall have some more of the family to keep. It is probable I shall live to see half a dozen grandsons of mine in Grub-street.

SCENE XI.

MONEYWOOD, HARRIOT, JACK.

Jack. Oh, Madam! the man whom you took for a bailiff is certainly some great man; he has a vast many jewels and other fine things about him; he offer'd me twenty guineas to shew him my master, and has given away so much money among the chairmen that some folks believe he intends to stand member of parliament for Westminster.

Money. Nay, then I am sure he is worth inquiring into. So, d'ye hear, sirrah, make as much haste as you can before me, and desire him to part with no more money till I come.

Har. So, now my mother is in pursuit of money, I may securely go in pursuit of my lover: and I am mistaken, good mamma, if e'en you wou'd not think that the better pursuit of the two.

In generous love transporting raptures lie,
Which age, with all its treasures, cannot buy.

ACT III. SCENE I.

SCENE, *the Playhouse.*

Enter LUCKLESS *as Master of the Show, and* MANAGER.

LUCKLESS.

It's very surprising, that after I have been at all this expence and trouble in setting my things up in your house, you should desire me to recant; and now too, when the spectators are all assembled, and will either have the show or their money.

Man. Nay, Sir, I am very ready to perform my covenant with you; but I am told that some of the players do not like their parts, and threaten to leave the house: some to the Hay-Market, some to Goodman's-Fields, and others to set up two or three more new playhouses in several parts of the town.

Luck. I have quieted all that, and believe there is not one engag'd in the performance but who is now very well satisfied.

Man. Well, Sir, then so am I: but pray what is the design or plot? for I could make neither head nor tail on't.

Luck. Why, Sir, the chief business is the election of an arch-poet, or, as others call him, a poet laureat, to the Goddess of Nonsense. I have introduc'd, indeed, several other characters, not entirely necessary to the main design; for I was assur'd by a very eminent critic that in the way of writing great latitude might be allow'd; and that a writer of puppet-shows might take

as much more liberty than a writer of operas, as an opera-writer might be allow'd beyond a writer of plays. As for the scene, it lies on the other side the river Styx, and all the people in my play are dead.

Man. I wish they may not be damn'd too, with all my heart.

Luck. Sir, I depend much on the good-nature of the audience; but they are impatient, I hear them knock with their canes. Let us begin immediately: I think we will have an overture play'd on this occasion. Mr. Seedo, have you not provided a new overture on this occasion!

Seedo. I have compos'd one.

Luck. Then pray let us have it. Come, Sir, be pleas'd to sit down by me.

Gentlemen, the first thing I present you with is Punchinello.

[*The curtain draws, and discovers Punch in a great chair.*

PUNCH *sings.*

AIR I. *Whilst the town's brimful of folly.*

Whilst the town's brimful of farces,
Flocking whilst we see her asses
Thick as grapes upon a bunch,
Critics, whilst you smile on madness,
And more stupid, solemn sadness;
Sure you will not frown on Punch.

Luck. The next is Punch's wife Joan.

Enter JOAN.

Joan. What can ail my husband? he is continually humming tunes, though his voice be only fit to warble

at Hog's Norton, where the pigs would accompany it with organs. I was in hopes death would have stopped his mouth at last. But he keeps his old harmonious humour even in the shades.

Punch. Be not angry, dear Joan; Orpheus obtain'd his wife from the shades by charming Pluto with his music.

Joan. Sirrah, sirrah, should Pluto hear you sing, you cou'd expect no less punishment than Tantalus has:—— nay, the waters would be brought above your mouth to stop it.

Punch. Truly, Madam, I don't wish the same success Orpheus met with: could I gain my own liberty, the devil might have you with all my heart.

AIR II.

Joan, Joan, Joan, has a thund'ring tongue,
And Joan, Joan, Joan, is a bold one.
How happy is he,
Who from wedlock is free;
For who'd have a wife to scold one?

Joan. Punch, Punch, Punch, pr'ythee think of your hunch,
Pr'ythee look to your great strutting belly:
Sirrah, if you dare
War with me declare,
I will beat your fat guts to a jelly.
[*They dance.*

AIR III. *Bobbing Joan.*

Pun. Joan, you are the plague of my life,
A rope wou'd be welcomer than such a wife.

Joan. Punch, your merits had you but shar'd,
Your neck had been longer by half a yard:
Pun. Ugly witch,
Joan. Son of a bitch,
Both. Wou'd you were hang'd or drown'd in a ditch.
[*Dance again.*

Pun. Since we hate like people in vogue,
Let us call not bitch and rogue:
Gentler titles let us use,
Hate each other, but not abuse.
Joan. Pretty dear!
Pun. Ah! Ma Chere!
Both. Joy of my life, and only care.
[*Dance, and Exeunt.*

Luck. Gentlemen, the next is Charon and a Poet; they are disputing about an affair pretty common with poets——going off without paying.

Enter CHARON *and a* POET.

Char. Never tell me, Sir, I expect my fare. I wonder what trade these authors drive in the other world: I would with as good a will see a soldier aboard my boat. A tatter'd red coat and a tatter'd black one have bilk'd me so often, that I am resolv'd never to take either of them up again——unless I am paid before-hand.

Poet. What a wretched thing it is to be poor! My body lay a fortnight in the other world before it was buried. And this fellow has kept my spirit a month, sunning himself on the other side the river, because my pockets were empty. Wilt thou be so kind as to shew me the way to the court of Nonsense?

Char. Ha, ha! the court of Nonsense! Why, pray, Sir, what have you to do there? these rags look more

like the dress of one of Apollo's people, than of Nonsense's.

Poet. Why, fellow, didst thou never carry rags to Nonsense?

Char. Truly, Sir, I cannot say but I have: but it is a long time ago, I assure you. But if you are really bound thither, and are a poet, as I presume from your outward appearance, you shou'd have brought a certificate from the goddess's agent, Mr. What d'ye-call-him, the gentleman that writes odes—so finely! However, that I may not hear any more of your verses on the river-side, I'll e'en carry you over on her account; she pays for all her insolvent votaries. Look at that account, Sir. She is the best deity to me in the shades.

Poet. Spirits imported for the goddess of Nonsense—

Five people of great quality,
Seven ordinary courtiers,
Nineteen attorneys,
Eleven counsellors,
One hundred poets, players, doctors, and apothecaries, fellows of the colleges, and members of the royal society.

Luck. Gentlemen, the next is one of Charon's men with a prisoner.

Enter SAILOR *and a* SEXTON.

Char. How now?

Sail. We have caught him at last. This is Mr. Robgrave, the sexton, who has plundered so many spirits.

Char. Are you come at last, Sir? What have you to say for yourself? Ha! Where are all the jewels and other valuable things you have stolen? Where are they, sirrah? ha!

Sex. Alack, Sir, I am but a poor rogue; the parish

officers and others have had them all: I had only a small reward for stealing them.

Char. Then you shall have another reward here, Sir. Carry him before justice Minos: the moment he gets on the other side the water, let him be shackled, and put aboard. [*Exeunt Sailor and Sexton.*

Poet. Who knows whether this rogue has not robb'd me too. I forgot to look in upon my body before I came away.

Char. Had you any things of value buried with you?

Poet. Things of inestimable value; six folios of my own works.

Luck. Most poets of this age will have their works buried with them. [*The next is the ghost of a Director.*

Enter DIRECTOR.

Dir. Mr. Charon, I want a boat to cross the river.

Char. You shall have a place, Sir; I believe I have just room for you, unless you are a lawyer, and I have strict orders to carry no more over yet: Hell is too full of them already.

Dir. Sir, I am a director.

Char. A director! what's that?

Dir. A director of a company, Sir. I am surpris'd you should not know what that is: I thought our names had been famous enough on this road.

Char. Oh, Sir, I ask your honour's pardon; will you be pleased to go aboard.

Dir. I must have a whole boat by myself: for I have two waggon loads of treasure that will be here immediately.

Char. It is as much as my place is worth to take any thing of that nature aboard.

Dir. Pshaw, pshaw, you shall go snacks with me, and I warrant we cheat the devil. I have been already too

hard for him in the other world.——Do you understand what security on bottomry is? I'll make your fortune.

Char. Here, take the gentleman, let him be well fetter'd, and carried aboard; away with him.

Sail. Sir, here are a waggon-load of ghosts arriv'd from England, that were knock'd on the head at a late election.

Char. Fit out another boat immediately: but be sure to search their pockets, that they carry nothing over with them. I found a bank-bill of fifty pounds t'other day in the pocket of a cobler's ghost, who came hither on the same account.

2 *Sail.* Sir, a great number of passengers arriv'd from London, all bound to the court of Nonsense.

Char. Some plague, I suppose, or a fresh cargo of physicians come to town from the universities.

Luck. Now, gentlemen, I shall produce such a set of figures as I defy all Europe, except our own playhouses, to equal.—Come, put away; pray mind these figures.

Enter DON TRAGEDIO, SIR FARCICAL COMIC, DR. ORATOR, SIGNIOR OPERA, MONSIEUR PANTOMIME, *and* MRS. NOVEL.

Poet. Ha! Don Tragedio, your most obedient servant. Sir Farcical! Dr. Orator! I am heartily glad to see you. Dear Signior Opera! Monsieur Pantomime! Ah! Mynheer Van-treble! Mrs. Novel in the shades too! What lucky distemper cou'd have sent so much good company hither?

Trag. A tragedy occasion'd me to die;
That perishing the first day, so did I.

Farc. A pastoral sent me out of the world. My life went in with a hiss; stap my vitals.

Ora. A Muggletonian dog stabb'd me.

AIR IV. *Silvia, my dearest.*

Oper. Claps universal,
Applauses resounding;
Hisses confounding
Attending my song:
My senses drowned,
And I fell down dead;
Whilst I was singing, ding, dang, dong.

Poet. Well, Monsieur Pantomime, how came you by your fate?

Pantom. [*Makes signs to his neck.*]

Poet. Broke his neck. Alas, poor gentleman!—And you, Mynheer Van-treble, what sent you hither? And you, Madam Novel?

AIR V. *'Twas when the seas were roaring.*

Nov. Oh! pity all a maiden,
Condemn'd hard fates to prove;
I rather would have laid-in
Than thus have died for love!
'Twas hard to encounter death-a
Before the bridal bed;
Ah! would I kept my breath-a
And lost my maidenhead.

Poet. Poor lady!

Char. Come, my masters, it is a rare fresh gale; if you please, I'll shew you aboard.

Luck. Observe, gentlemen, how these figures walk off. The next, gentlemen, is a Blackamore lady, who comes to present you with a saraband and castanets. [*A dance.* Now, gentlemen and ladies, I shall produce a Bookseller who is the prime minister of Nonsense, and the Poet.

Enter BOOKSELLER *and* POET.

Poet. 'Tis strange, 'tis wonderous strange!

Book. And yet 'tis true. Did you observe her eyes?

Poet. Her ears, rather, for there she took the infection. She saw the Signior's visage in his voice.

Book. Did you not mark how she melted when he sung?

Poet. I saw her like another Dido. I saw her heart rise up to her eyes, and drop again to her ears.

Book. That a woman of so much sense as the Goddess of Nonsense should be taken thus at first sight! I have serv'd her faithfully these thirty years as a bookseller in the upper world, and never knew her guilty of one folly before.

Poet. Nay, certainly, Mr. Curry, you know as much of her as any man.

Book. I think I ought; I am sure I have made as large oblations to her as all Warwick-lane and Paternoster-row.

Poet. But is she, this night, to be married to Signior Opera.

Book. This is to be the bridal night. Well, this will be the strangest thing that has happen'd in the shades, since the rape of Proserpine.—But now I think on't, what news bring you from the other world?

Poet. Why affairs go much in the same road there as when you were alive; authors starve, and booksellers grow fat. Grub-street harbours as many pirates as ever Algiers did. They have more theatres than are at Paris, and just as much wit as there is at Amsterdam; they have ransack'd all Italy for singers, and all France for dancers.

Book. And all hell for conjurors.

Poet. My lord mayor has shorten'd the time of Bar-

tholomew-fair in Smithfield, and so they are resolved to keep it all the year round at the other end of the town.

Book. I find matters go swimmingly; but I fancy I am wanted. If you please, Sir, I will shew you the way.

Poet. Sir, I follow you. [*Exeunt.*

Enter PUNCH.

Punch. You, fidler.

Luck. Well, Punch, what's the matter now?

Punch. What do you think my wife Joan is about?

Luck. Faith, I can't tell.

Punch. Odsbobs, she is got with three women of quality at quadrille.

Luck. Quadrille? Ha, ha!

Punch. I have taken a resolution to run away from her, and set up a trade.

Luck. A trade? why, you have no stock?

Punch. Oh, but I intend to break, cheat my creditors, and so get one.

Luck. That bite is too stale, master Punch.

Punch. Is it? Then I'll e'en turn lawyer. There is no stock required there, but a stock of impudence.

Luck. Yes, there is a stock of law, without which you will starve at the bar.

Punch. Ay, but I'll get upon the bench, then I shall soon have law enough; for then I can make any thing I say to be law.

Luck. Hush, you scurrilous rascal.

Punch. Odsbobs, I have hit it now.

Luck. What now?

Punch. I have it at last; the rarest trade! Punch, thou art made for ever.

Luck. What conceit has the fool got in his head now?

Punch. I'll e'en turn parliament-man.

Luck. Ha, ha, ha! Why, sirrah, thou hast neither interest nor qualification.

Punch. How! not interest? Yes, Sir, Punch is very well known to have a very considerable interest in all the corporations in England; and for qualification, if I have no estate of my own, I can borrow one.

Luck. This will never do, master Punch —— You must think of something you have a better qualification for.

Punch. Ay, why then I'll turn great man, that requires no qualification whatsoever.

Luck. Get you gone, you impudent rogue.——Gentlemen, the next figures are Somebody and Nobody, come to present you with a song and a dance.

Enter SOMEBODY *and* NOBODY.

AIR VII. *Black Joke.*

Some. Of all the men in London town,
Or knaves or fools, in coat, or gown,
The representative am I.

No. Go thro' the world, and you will find,
In all the classes of human-kind,
Many a jolly Nobody.
For, him, a Nobody, sure we may call,
Who during his life does nothing at all,
But eat and snore,
And drink, and roar,
From whore to the tavern, from tavern to whore,
With a lac'd coat, and that is all.

Luck. Gentlemen, this is the end of the first interlude.

Luck. Now, gentlemen, I shall present you with the

most glorious scene that has ever appeared on the stage; it is the COURT OF NONSENSE. Play away, soft music, and draw up the curtain.

The curtain drawn up to soft music, discovers the GODDESS OF NONSENSE *on a throne; the* ORATOR *in a tub;* TRAGEDIO, *&c. attending.*

Nons. Let all my votaries prepare
To celebrate this joyful day.

Luck. Gentlemen, observe what a lover of recitativo Nonsense is.

Nons. Monsieur Pantomime! you are welcome.

Pant. [*Cuts a paper.*]

Nons. Alas! poor gentleman! he is modest: you may speak! no words offend, that have no wit in them.

Mast. Why, Madam Nonsense, don't you know that Monsieur Pantomime is dumb? and yet, let me tell you, he has been of great service to you; he is the only one of your votaries that sets people asleep without talking. But here's Don Tragedio will make noise enough.

Trag. Yes, Tragedio is indeed my name,
Long since recorded in the rolls of fame,
At Lincoln's-Inn, and eke at Drury-Lane.
Let everlasting thunder sound my praise,
And forked light'ning in my scutcheon blaze;
To Shakespear, Johnson, Dryden, Lee, or Rowe,
I not a line, no, not a thought, do owe.
Me, for my novelty, let all adore,
For, as I wrote, none ever wrote before.

Nons. Thou art doubly welcome, welcome.

Trag. That welcome, yes, that welcome is my due,
Two tragedies I wrote, and wrote for you;
And had not hisses, hisses me dismay'd,
By this, I'd writ two-score, two-score, by jay'd.

Luck. By jay'd! Ay, that's another excellence of the

Don's; he does not only glean up all the bad words of other authors, but makes new bad words of his own.

Farc. Nay, i'gad, I have made new words, and spoil'd old ones too, if you talk of that; I have made foreigners break English, and Englishmen break Latin. I have as great a confusion of languages in my play as was at the building of Babel.

Luck. And so much the more extraordinary, because the author understands no language at all.

Farc. No language at all!——Stap my vitals.

Nons. Dr. Orator, I have heard of you.

Orat. Ay, and you might have heard me too; I bawl'd loud enough, I'm sure.

Mast. She might have heard you: but, if she had understood your advertisements, I will believe Nonsense to have more understanding than Apollo.

Orat. Have understood me, SIR? What has understanding to do? My hearers would be diverted, and they are so; which could not be if understanding were necessary, because very few of them have any.

Nons. You've all deserved my hearty thanks——but here my treasure I bestow. [*To* Opera.

Oper. Your highness knows what reward I prize.

AIR VIII. *Lillibolera.*

Op. Let the foolish philosopher strive in his cell,
By wisdom, or virtue, to merit true praise;
The soldier in hardship and danger still dwell,
That glory and honour may crown his last days:
The patriot sweat,
To be thought great;
Or beauty all day at the looking-glass toil;
That popular voices
May ring their applauses,
While a breath is the only reward of their coil.

But would you a wise man to action incite,
Be riches propos'd the reward of his pain:
In riches is center'd all human delight;
No joy is on earth but what gold can obtain.
If women, wine,
Or grandeur fine,
Be most your delight, all these riches can;
Would you have men to flatter?
To be rich is the matter;
When you cry he is rich, you cry a great man.

Nons. [*Repeating in an ecstasy.*]
'When you cry he is rich, you cry a great man.'
Bravissimo! I long to be you wife.

Luck. Gentlemen, observe and take notice how the Goddess of Nonsense is smitten by music, and falls in love with the ghost of Signior Opera.

Novel. If all my romances ever pleas'd the ear of my goddess—if I ever found favour in her sight—Oh, do not rob me thus!

Nons. What means my daughter?

Novel. Alas, he is my husband!

Curry. But though he were your husband in the other world, death solves that tie, and he is at liberty now to take another; and I never knew any one instance of a husband here, who would take the same wife again.

AIR IX. *Whilst I gazed on Chloe trembling.*

Novel. May all maids from me take warning.
How a lover's arms they fly:
Lest the first kind offer scorning,
They, without a second, die.

How unhappy is my passion!
How tormenting is my pain!

If you thwart my inclination,
Let me die for love again.

Curry. Again! What, did you die for love of your husband?

Novel. He knows he ought to have been so.——Yes, he knows I dy'd for love; for I dy'd in childbed.

Orat. Why, Madam, did you not tell me all the road hither that you was a virgin?

AIR X. *Highland Laddy.*

Oper. I was told, in my life,
Death for ever
Did dissever
Men from ev'ry mortal strife,
And that greatest plague, a wife.

For had the priests possest men,
That to Tartarus
Wives came after us,
Their devil would be a jest then,
And our devil a wife.

Nons. Avaunt, polluted wretch! begone;
Think not I'll take pollution to my arms,
No, no,———no, no,———no, no, no.

Oper. Well, since I can't have a goddess, I'll e'en prove a man of honour.———I was always in love with thee, my angel; but ambition is a dreadful thing. However my ghost shall pay the debts of my body.

Novel. Now I am happy, verily.

Oper. My long-lost dear!

Novel. My new-found bud!

AIR XI. *Dusty Miller.*

Oper. Will my charming creature
Once again receive me?
Tho' I prov'd a traitor,
Will she still believe me?

I will well repay thee
For past faults of roving,
Nor shall any day be
Without proofs of loving.

On that tender lily breast
Whilst I lie panting,
Both together blest,
Both with transports fainting.

Both. Sure no human hearts
Were ever so delighted!
Death, which others parts,
Hath our souls united.

AIR XII. *Over the Hills and far away.*

Oper. Were I laid on Scotland's coast,
And in my arms embrac'd my dear,
Let scrubbado do its most,
I wou'd know no grief or fear.

Nov. Were we cast on Ireland's soil,
There confin'd in bogs to dwell,
For thee potatoes I wou'd boil,
No Irish spouse should feast so well.

Oper. And tho' we scrubb'd it all the day,
Nov. We'd kiss and hug the night away;
Oper. Scotch and Irish both should say,
Both. Oh! how blest, how blest are they!

Orat. Since my Goddess is disengaged from one lover, may the humblest, yet not the least diligent, of her servants hope she would smile on him?

Luck. Master Orator, you had best try to charm the Goddess with an oration.

Orat. The history of a fiddle and a fiddlestick is going to be held forth; being particularly desired in a letter from a certain querist on that point.

A fiddle is a statesman: Why? Because it's hollow. A fiddlestick is a drunkard: Why? Because it loves ros'ning.

Luck. Gentlemen, observe how he balances his hands; his left hand is the fiddle, and his right hand is the fiddlestick.

Orat. A fiddle is like a beau's nose, because the bridge is often down; a fiddlestick is like a mountebank, because it plays upon a crowd.——A fiddle is like a stockjobber's tongue, because it sounds different notes; and a fiddlestick is like a stockjobber's wig, because it has a great deal of horsehair in it.

Luck. And your oration is like yourself, because it has a great deal of nonsense in it.

Nons. In vain you try to charm my ears, unless by music.

Orat. Have at you then.

Mast. Gentlemen, observe how the Doctor sings in his tub. Here are no wires; all alive, alive, oh!

Orat. Chimes of the times, to the tune of Moll Pately.

AIR XIII. *Moll Pately.*

All men are birds by nature, Sir,
  Tho' they have not wings to fly,
On earth a soldier's a creature, Sir,
  Much resembling a kite in the sky;

The physician is a fowl, Sir,
Whom most men call an owl, Sir,
Who by his hooting,
Hooting, hooting,
Hooting, hooting,
Hooting, hooting,
Tells us that death is nigh.

The usurer is a swallow, Sir,
That can swallow gold by the jorum;
A woodcock is 'Squire Shallow, Sir;
And a goose is oft of the quorum;
The gamester is a rook, Sir,
The lawyer, with his Coke, Sir,
Is but a raven,
Croaking, croaking,
Croaking, croaking,
Croaking, croaking,
After the ready Rhinorum.

Young virgins are as scarce as rails, Sir;
Plenty as batts the night-walkers go;
Soft Italians are nightingales, Sir;
And a cock-sparrow mimics a beau;
Like birds men are to be caught, Sir;
Like birds men are to be bought, Sir,
Men of a side,
Like birds of a feather,
Will flock together,
Will flock together,
Both sexes like birds will——too.

Nons. 'Tis all in vain.
Trag. Is Nonsense of me then forgetful grown,
And must the Signior be preferr'd alone?

Is it for this, for this, ye gods, that I
Have in one scene made some folks laugh, some cry?
For this does my low blust'ring language creep?
At once to wake you, and to make you sleep?

Farc. And so all my puns, and quibbles, and conundrums, are quite forgotten, stap my vitals!

Orat. More chimes of the times, to the tune of Rogues, rogues, rogues.

AIR XIV. *There was a jovial beggar.*

The stone that all things turns at will
To gold, the chemist craves;
But gold without the chemist's skill,
Turns all men into knaves.
For a cheating they will go, &c.

The merchant would the courtier cheat,
When on his goods he lays
Too high a price——but faith he's bit,
For a courtier never pays.
For a cheating, &c.

The lawyer, with a face demure,
Hangs him who steals your pelf;
Because the good man can endure
No robber but himself.
For a cheating, &c.

Betwixt the quack and highwayman
What difference can there be?
Though this with pistol, that with pen,
Both kill you for a fee.
For a cheating, &c.

The husband cheats his loving wife,
And to a mistress goes;

Whilst she at home, to ease her life,
Carouses with the beaus.
For a cheating, &c.

That some directors cheats were,
Some have made bold to doubt;
Did not the supercargo's care
Prevent their finding out.
For a cheating, &c.

The tenant doth the steward nick
(So low this art we find),
The steward doth his lordship trick,
My lord tricks all mankind.
For a cheating, &c.

One sect there are, to whose fair lot
No cheating arts do fall;
And those are parsons call'd, God wot;
And so I cheat you all.
For a cheating, &c.

Enter CHARON.

Char. An't please your majesty, there is an odd sort of a man on t'other side of the water says he's recommended to you by some people of quality.——Egad, I don't care to take him aboard, not I.——He says his name is Hurloborumbo——rumbo——Hurloborumbolo, I think he calls himself; he looks like one of Apollo's people, in my opinion; he seems to be mad enough to be a real poet.

Nons. Take him aboard.

Char. I had forgot to tell your ladyship I hear rare news; they say you are to be declared Goddess of Wit.

Curry. That's no news, Mr. Charon.

Char. Well, I'll take Hurloborumbo aboard.

[*Exit* Charon.

Orat. I must win the goddess before he arrives, or else I shall lose her for ever.——A rap at the times.

AIR XV. *When I was a dame of honour.*

Come all who've heard my cushion beat,
  Confess me as full of dullness
As any egg is full of meat,
  Or full moon is of fullness;
Let the justice and his clerk both own
  Than theirs my dullness greater;
And tell how I've harangu'd the town
  When I was a bold orator.

The lawyer wrangling at the bar,
  While the reverend bench is dozing,
The scribbler in a pamphlet war,
  Or Grub-street bard composing:
The trudging quack in scarlet cloak,
  Or coffee-house politic prater;
Can none come up to what I have spoke,
  When I was a bold orator.

The well-bred courtier telling lies,
  Or Levée hunter believing;
The vain coquette that rolls her eyes,
  More empty fops deceiving;
The parson of dissenting gang,
  Or flattering dedicator,
Could none of them like me harangue,
  When I was a bold orator.

Enter PUNCH.

Punch. You, you, you.
Luck. What's the matter, Punch?

Punch. Who is that?

Luck. That's an orator, master Punch.

Punch. An orator——What's that?

Luck. Why an orator is—egad, I can't tell what; ——he is a man that nobody dares dispute with.

Punch. Say you so? I'll be with him presently. Bring out my tub there. I'll dispute with you, I'll warrant. I am a Muggletonian.

Orat. I am not.

Punch. Then you are not of my opinion.

Orat. Sirrah, I know that you and your whole tribe would be the death of me; but I am resolv'd to proceed to confute you as I have done hitherto, and as long as I have breath you shall hear me; and I hope I have breath enough to blow you all out of the world.

Punch. If noise will.

Orat. Sir, I——

Punch. Hear me, Sir.

Nons. Hear him; hear him; hear him.

AIR XVI. *Hey, Barnaby, take it for warning.*

Punch. No tricks shall save your bacon,
Orator, Orator, you are mistaken;
Punch will not be thus confuted,
Bring forth your reasons, or you are non-suited.
Heigh, ho.

No tricks shall save your bacon,
Orator, Orator you are mistaken.

Orat. Instead of reasons advancing,
Let the dispute be concluded by dancing.
Ti, to.

[*They dance.*]

Nons. 'Tis all in vain: a virgin I will live; and oh, great Signior, pr'ythee take this chaplet, and still wear it for my sake.

Luck. Gentlemen, observe how Signior Opera is created archpoet to the Goddess of Nonsense.

Trag. And does great Nonsense then at length determine
To give the chaplet to that singing vermin!

Nons. I do.

Trag. Then Opera come on, and let us try,
Whether shall wear the chaplet, you or I.

AIR XVII. *Be kind, and love.*

Nov. Oh, spare to take his precious life away;
So sweet a voice must sure your passion lay;
Oh hear his gentle murmurs first, and then,
If you can kill him, I will cry Amen.

Trag. Since but a song you ask, a song I'll hear;
But tell him, that last song is his last prayer.

AIR XVIII.

Op. Barbarous cruel man,
I'll sing thus while I'm dying; I'm dying like a swan,
A swan,
A swan,
With my face all pale and wan.
More fierce art thou than pirates,
Than pirates,
Whom the Sirens' music charms,
Alarms,
Disarms;
More fierce than men on the high roads,
On the high - - - roads,
On the high - - - roads.

More fierce than men on the high roads.
When Polly Peachum warms.
The devil
Was made civil,
By Orpheus's tuneful charms;
And can - - -
- - - - - - - - n,
He gentler prove than man?

Trag. I cannot do it—— [*Sheaths his sword.*
Methinks I feel my flesh congeal'd to bone,
And know not if I'm flesh and blood, or stone.

Pant. [*Runs several times round the stage.*]

Nons. Alas! what means Monsieur Pantomime?

Curry. By his pointing to his head, I suppose he would have the chaplet.

Nons. Pretty youth.

Nov. Oh, my dear, how shall I express the trouble of my soul.

Op. If there be sympathy in love, I'm sure I felt it; for I was in a damnable fright too.

Nov. Give me a buss then.

AIR XIX. *Under the greenwood tree.*

In vain a thousand heroes and kings
Should court me to their arms,
In vain should give a thousand fine things,
For thee I'd reserve my charms:
On that dear breast, intranc'd in joy,
Oh, let me ever be.

Op. Oh, how I will kiss thee,
How I'll embliss thee,
When thou art a-bed with me!

Nons. [*Repeats.*] Oh, how I will kiss thee, &c.
Alas! what mighty noise?

Luck. Gentlemen, the next is a messenger.

Enter MESSENGER.

Mes. Stay, goddess, nor with haste the prize bequeath,
A mighty sprite now hastens here beneath,
Long in the world your noble cause he fought,
Your laureat there, your precepts still he taught,
To his great son he leaves that laurel now,
And hastens to receive one here below.

Nons. I can't revoke my grant, but he
Shall manager of our players be.

Luck. The next is Count Ugly, from the Opera-house in the Hay-market.

Enter COUNT UGLY.

Nons. Too late, O mighty count, you came.

Count. I ask not for myself, for I disdain
O'er the poor ragged tribe of bards to reign.
Me did my stars to happier fates prefer,
Sur-intendant des plaisirs d'Angleterre;
If masquerades you have, let those be mine,
But on the Signior let the laurel shine.

Trag. What is thy plea? Has't written?

Count. No, nor read.
But if from dulness any may succeed,
To that and nonsense I good title plead.
Nought else was ever in my masquerade.

Nons. No more, by Styx I swear
That Opera the crown shall wear.

AIR.

Nov. Away each meek pretender flies,
Opera thou hast gain'd the prize.

Nonsense grateful still must own,
That thou best support'st her throne.
For her subscriptions thou didst gain
By thy soft alluring strain,
When Shakespear's thought
And Congreve's brought
Their aids to sense in vain.

Beauties, who subdue mankind,
Thy soft chains alone can bind;
See within their lovely eyes
The melting wish arise:
While thy sounds inchant the ear,
Lovers think the nymph sincere;
And projectors,
And directors,
Lose a while their fear.

Enter CHARON.

Luck. How now, Charon? you are not to enter yet.

Char. To enter, Sir? Alack-a-day: we are all undone: here are Sir John Bindover and a constable coming in.

Enter SIR JOHN, *and* CONSTABLE.

Const. Are you the master of the puppet-show?

Luck. Yes, Sir.

Const. Then you must along with me, Sir; I have a warrant for you, Sir.

Luck. For what?

Sir John. For abusing Nonsense, sirrah.

Const. People of quality are not to have their diversions libell'd at this rate.

Luck. Of what do you accuse me, gentlemen?

Sir John. Shall you abuse Nonsense, when the whole town supports it?

Luck. Pox on't, had this fellow staid a few moments longer, till the dance had been over, I had been easy. Harkye, Mr. Constable, shall I only beg your patience for one dance, and then I'll wait on you?

Sir John. Sirrah, don't try to corrupt the magistrate with your bribes: here shall be no dancing.

Nov. What does this fellow of a constable mean by interrupting our play?

AIR XXI. *Fair Dorinda.*

Oh, Mr. Constable,
  Drunken rascal,
Would I had thee at the Rose.
  May'st thou be beaten,
  Hang'd up and eaten,
Eaten by the carrion crows.
The filth that lies in common shores,
  May it ever lie in thy nose.
    May it ever
    Lie in thy nose.
  O may it lie in thy nose.

Luck. Mollify yourself, Madam.

Sir John. That is really a pretty creature; it were a piece of charity to take her to myself for a handmaid.

[*Aside.*

Const. Very pretty, very pretty truly:—If magistrates are to be abus'd at this rate, the devil may be a constable for me. Hark'ee, Madam, do you know who we are?

Nov. A rogue, Sir.

Const. Madam, I'm a constable by day, and a justice of peace by night.

Nov. That is a buzzard by day, and an owl by night.

AIR XXII. *Newmarket.*

Const. Why, Madam, do you give such words as these
To a constable and a justice of peace?
I fancy you'll better know how to speak
By that time you've been in Bridewell a week;
Have beaten good hemp, and been
Whipt at a post;
I hope you'll repent, when some skin
You have lost.
But if this makes you tremble, I'll not be severe:
Come down a good guinea, and you shall be clear.

Nov. Oh, Sir John, you, I am sure, are the commander in this enterprise. If you will prevent the rest of our show, let me beg you will permit the dance.

AIR XXIII. *Charming Betty.*

Sweetest honey,
Good Sir Johnny,
Pr'ythee let us take a dance,
Leave your canting,
Zealous ranting,
Come and shake a merry haunch.
Motions firing,
Sounds inspiring,
We are led to softer joys;
Where in trances
Each soul dances,
Music then seems only noise.

Sir John. Verily I am conquer'd. Pity prevaileth over severity, and the flesh hath subdued the spirit. I feel a motion in me, and whether it be of grace or

no I am not certain. Pretty maid, I cannot be deaf any longer to your prayers; I will abide the performing a dance, and will myself, being thereto mov'd by an inward working, accompany you therein, taking for my partner that reverend gentleman.

Mast. Then strike up.

Enter WITMORE, MONEYWOOD, HARRIOT, BANTAMITE.

Wit. Long live his majesty of Bantam!

Money. Heaven preserve him!

Bant. Your gracious father, Sir, greets you well.

Luck. What, in the Devil's name, is the meaning of this?

Bant. I find he is entirely ignorant of his father.

Wit. Ay, Sir, it is very common in this country for a man not to know his father.

Luck. What do you mean?

Bant. His features are much alter'd.

Luck. Sir, I shall alter your features, if you proceed.

Bant. Give me leave to explain myself. I was your tutor in your earliest days, sent by your father, his present majesty Francis IV. king of Bantam, to shew you the world. We arrived at London; when one day, among other frolics, our ship's-crew shooting the bridge, the boat overset, and of all our company, I and your royal self were only saved by swimming to Billingsgate: but tho' I saved my life, I lost for some time my senses, and you, as I then fear'd, for ever. When I recover'd, after a long fruitless search for my royal master, I set sail for Bantam, but was driven by the winds on far distant coasts, and wander'd several years, till at last I arriv'd once more at Bantam.——Guess how I was receiv'd —The king order'd me to be imprison'd for life. At last some lucky chance brought thither a merchant, who offer'd this jewel as a present to the king of Bantam.

Luck. Ha! it is the same which was tied upon my arm, which by good luck I preserv'd from every other accident, till want of money forced me to pawn it.

Bant. The merchant, being strictly examined, said he had it of a pawnbroker; upon which I was immediately dispatch'd to England, and the merchant kept close prisoner till my return, then to be punished with death, or rewarded with the government of an island.

Luck. Know then, that at that time when you lost your senses, I also lost mine. I was taken up half-dead by a waterman, and convey'd to his wife, who sold oysters, by whose assistance I recover'd. But the waters of the Thames, like those of Lethe, had caus'd an entire oblivion of my former fortune.—But now it breaks in like light upon me, and I begin to recollect it all. Is not your name Gonsalvo?

Bant. It is.

Luck. Oh, my Gonsalvo! }
Bant. Oh, my dearest lord! } [*Embrace.*

Luck. But say by what lucky accident you discover'd me?

Bant. I did intend to have advertis'd you in the Evening Post, with a reward; but being directed by the merchant to the pawnbroker, I was accidentally there inquiring after you when your boy brought your nab. (Oh, sad remembrance, that the son of a king should pawn a hat!) The woman told me that was the boy that pawn'd the jewel, and of him I learnt where you lodg'd.

Luck. Prodigious fortune! [*A wind-horn without.*

Enter MESSENGER.

Mess. An express is arriv'd from Bantam with the news of his majesty's death.

Bant. Then, Sir, you are king. Long live Henry I. king of Bantam.

Omnes. Long live Henry I. king of Bantam.

Luck. Witmore, I now may repay your generosity.

Wit. Fortune has repaid me, I am sure, more than she ow'd, by conferring this blessing on you.

Luck. My friend.——But here I am indebted to the golden goddess for having given me an opportunity to aggrandise the mistress of my soul, and set her on the throne of Bantam. Come, Madam, now you may lay aside your mask: so once repeat your acclamations; Long live Henry and Harriot, king and queen of Bantam.

Omnes. Huzza!

AIR XXIV. *Gently touch the warbling lyre.*

Harr. Let others fondly court a throne,
All my joy's in you alone;
Let me find a crown in you,
Let me find a sceptre too,
Equal in the court or grove,
I am blest, do you but love.

Luck. Were I not with you to live,
Bantam would no pleasure give.
Happier in some forest I
Could upon that bosom lie.
I would guard you from all harms,
While you slept within my arms.

Harr. Would an Alexander rise,
Him I'd view with scornful eyes.

Luck. Would Helen with thy charms compare,
Her I'd think not half so fair:
Dearest shalt thou ever be.

Harr. Thou alone shalt reign in me.

Const. I hope your majesty will pardon a poor ignorant constable: I did not know your worship, I assure you.

Luck. Pardon you——Ay, more—You shall be chief constable of Bantam.—You, Sir John, shall be chief justice of peace; you, Sir, my orator; you my poet-laureat; you my bookseller; you, Don Tragedio, Sir Farcical, Signior Opera, and Count Ugly, shall entertain the city of Bantam with your performances! Mrs. Novel, you shall be a romance-writer! and to shew my generosity, Monsieur Marplay, you shall superintend my theatres.—All proper servants for the king of Bantam.

Money. I always thought he had something more than ordinary in him.

Luck. This gentlewoman is the queen's mother.

Money. For want of a better, gentlemen.

AIR XXV. *Oh ponder well.*

Money. Alack how alter'd is my fate!
What changes have I seen!
For I, who lodgings let of late,
Am now again a queen.

Punch. And I, who in this puppet-show
Have played Punchenello,
Will now let all the audience know
I am no common fellow.

Punch. If his majesty of Bantam will give me leave, I can make a discovery which will be to his satisfaction. You have chose for a wife Henrietta, princess of Old Brentford.

Omnes. How!

Punch. When the king of Old Brentford was expell'd by the king of the New, the queen flew away with her little daughter, then about two years old, and was never heard of since. But I sufficiently recollect the phiz of my mother; and thus I ask her blessing.

Money. Oh, my son!

Harr. Oh, my brother!

Punch. Oh, my sister!

Money. I am sorry in this pickle to remember who I am. But alas! too true is all you've said. Tho' I have been reduc'd to let lodgings, I was the queen of Brentford; and this, though a player, is a king's son.

Enter JOAN.

Joan. Then I am a king's daughter, for this gentleman is my husband.

Money. My daughter!

Harr. } My sister!
Luck. }

Punch. My wife!

Luck. Strike up kettle-drums and trumpets.—Punch, I will restore you into your kingdom at the expence of my own. I will send an express to Bantam for my army.

Punch. Brother, I thank you.——And now, if you please, we will celebrate these happy discoveries with a dance.

A DANCE.

Luck. Taught by my fate, let never bard despair
Though long he drudge, and feed on Grub-street air:
Since him (at last) 'tis possible to see
As happy and as great a king as me.

EPILOGUE.

1 *Poet*, ...	MR. JONES.
2 *Poet*, ...	MR. DOVE.
3 *Poet*, ...	MR. MARSHAL.
4 *Poet*, ...	MR. WELLS, JUN.
Player, ...	MISS PALMS.
Cat.	MRS. MARTIN.

Four POETS *sitting at a Table.*

1 *Po.* BRETHREN, we are assembled here to write
An Epilogue, which must be spoke to-night.
2 *Po.* Let the first lines be to the pit address'd.
3 *Po.* If critic's too were mention'd, it were best;
With fulsome flattery let them be cramm'd,
But if they damn the play———
1 *Po.* ——————Let them be damn'd.
2 *Po.* Supposing, therefore, brother, we should lay
Some very great encomiums on the play?
3 *Po.* It cannot be amiss———
1 *Po.* ——————Now mount the boxes,
Abuse the beaus, and compliment the doxies.
4 *Po.* Abuse the beaus——but how?
1 *Po.* ——————Oh! never mind;
In ev'ry modern Epilogue you'll find
Enough which we may borrow of that kind.
3 *Po.* What will the name of imitation soften?

1 *Po.* Oh! Sir, you cannot say good things too often;
And sure those thoughts, which in another shine,
Become not duller by becoming mine.
3 *Po.* I'm satisfied.
1 *Po.* ———The audience is already
Divided into critic, beau, and lady;
Nor box, nor pit, nor gallery can shew
One, who's not a lady, critic, or a beau.
3 *Po.* It must be very difficult to please
Fancies so odd, so opposite as these.
1 *Po.* The task is not so difficult, as put;
There's one thing pleases all.
2 *Po.* ——What is that?
1 *Po.* ——————————Smut.
For as a whore is lik'd for being tawdry,
So is an Epilogue for——————————
3 *Po.* [*in a passion.*]———I order you,
On pain of my departure, not to chatter,
One word so very sav'ry of the creature;
For, by my pen, might I Parnassus share,
I'd not, to gain it all, offend the fair.
1 *Po.* You are too nice——for say whate'er we can,
Their modesty is safe behind a fan.
4 *Po.* Well, let us now begin.
3 *Po.* ——————————But we omit
An Epilogue's chief decoration, wit.
1 *Po.* It hath been so; but that stale custom's broken;
Though dull to read, 'twill please you when 'tis spoken.

Enter the AUTHOR.

Auth. Fie, gentlemen, the audience now hath staid
This half hour for the Epilogue——
All Po. ——————————'Tis not made.

Auth. How! then I value not your aid of that,
I'll have the Epilogue spoken by a Cat.
Puss, puss, puss, puss, puss, puss, puss.

Enter CAT.

1 *Po.* ——————————I'm in a rage!
When cats come on, Poets should leave the stage.
[*Exeunt* Poets.

Cat. Mew, mew.

Auth. ——Poor puss, come hither, pretty rogue,
Who knows but you may come to be in vogue?
Some ladies like a cat, and some a dog.

Enter a PLAYER.

Play. Cass! cass! cass! cass! Fie, Mr. Luckless, what
Can you be doing with that filthy cat? [*Exit* Cat.

Auth. Oh! curst misfortune—what can I be doing?
This devil's coming in has proved my ruin.
She's driven the Cat and Epilogue away.

Play. Sure you are mad, and know not what you say.

Auth. Mad you may call me, Madam; but you'll own,
I hope I am not madder than the town.

Play. A cat to speak an Epilogue——

Auth. ——————————speak!——no,
Only to act the Epilogue in dumb-show.

Play. Dumb-show!

Auth. ——Why, pray, is that so strange in comedy?
And have you not seen Perseus and Andromeda?
Where you may find strange incidents intended,
And regular intrigues begun and ended,
Tho' not a word doth from an actor fall;
As 'tis polite to speak in murmurs small,
Sure, 'tis politer not to speak at all.

Play. But who is this?

Enter CAT *as a* WOMAN.

Auth. ——————— I know her not——
Cat. ——————————I, that
Am now a woman, lately was a Cat.
[*Turns to the audience.*
Gallants, you seem to think this transformation
As strange as was the rabbit's procreation;
That 'tis as odd a Cat shou'd take the habit
Of breeding us, as we shou'd breed a rabbit.
I'll warrant eating one of them wou'd be
As easy to a beau, as——kissing me.
I wou'd not for the world that thing shou'd catch us,
Cries scar'd Sir Plume——Fore gad, my lord, she'd scratch us.
Yet let not that deter you from your sport,
You'll find my nails are pair'd exceeding short.
But—Ha!—what murmurs through the benches roam!
The husbands cry—We've cat enough at home,
This transformation can be strange to no man,
There's a great likeness 'twixt a Cat and Woman.
Chang'd by her lover's earnest prayers, we're told,
A Cat was to a beauteous maid of old.
Cou'd modern husbands thus the gods prevail on,
Oh Gemini! what wife wou'd have no tail on.
Puss wou'd be seen where Madam lately sat,
And every Lady Townly be a Cat.
Say, all of you, whose honey-moon is over,
What wou'd you give such changes to discover;
And waking in the morn, instead of bride,
To find poor pussy purring by your side.
Say, gentle husbands, which of you wou'd curse,
And cry, My wife is alter'd for the worse?

Should to our sex the gods like justice shew,
And at our pray'rs transform our husbands too,
Many a Lord, who now his fellow scorns,
Wou'd then exceed a Cat by nothing—but his horns.
So plenty then wou'd be those foes to rats,
Henley might prove that all mankind are Cats.

THE

COFFEE-HOUSE POLITICIAN;

OR, THE

JUSTICE CAUGHT IN HIS OWN TRAP.

A COMEDY.

PROLOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MR. MILLWARD.

In ancient Greece, the infant Muse's school,
Where Vice first felt the pen of Ridicule,
With honest freedom and impartial blows
The Muse attack'd each Vice as it arose:
No grandeur could the mighty villain screen
From the just satire of the comic scene:
No titles could the daring poet cool,
Nor save the great right honourable fool.
They spar'd not even the aggressor's name,
And public villany felt public shame.

Long hath this gen'rous method been disus'd,
For Vice hath grown too great to be abus'd;
By pow'r defended from the piercing dart,
It reigns, and triumphs in the lordly heart;
While beaus, and cits, and squires, our scenes afford,
Justice preserves the rogues who wield her sword;
All satire against her tribunal's quash'd,
Nor lash the bards for fear of being lash'd.

But the heroic Muse, who sings to-night,
Through these neglected tracts attempts her flight.
Vice, cloth'd with pow'r, she combats with her pen,
And, fearless, dares the lion in his den.

Then only reverence to pow'r is due,
When public welfare is its only view:
But when the champions, whom the public arm
For their own good with pow'r, attempt their harm,
He sure must meet the general applause,
Who 'gainst those traitors fights the public cause.

And while these scenes the conscious knave displease,
Who feels within the criminal he sees,
The uncorrupt and good must smile, to find
No mark for satire in his generous mind.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Worthy,	MR. OGDEN.
Squeezum,	MR. HIPPISLEY.
Politic,	MR. CHAPMAN.
Ramble,	MR. WALKER.
Constant,	MR. MILWARD.
Sotmore,	MR. HULLET.
Dabble,	MR. RAY.
Quill,	MR. H. BULLOCK.
Staff,	MR. HALL.
Porer,	MR. MACLEAN.
Faithful,	MR. HOUGHTON.

WOMEN.

Hilaret,	MRS. YOUNGER.
Isabella,	MRS. BOHEME.
Mrs. Squeezum,	MRS. BULLOCK.
Mrs. Staff,	MRS. KILBY.
Cloris,	MRS. STEPHENS.

EVIDENCES, WATCH, &c.

SCENE, LONDON.

RAPE UPON RAPE;

OR, THE

JUSTICE CAUGHT IN HIS OWN TRAP.

ACT I. SCENE I.

SCENE, *a Parlour in* POLITIC'S *House. A table spread with newspapers. Chairs.*

HILARET, CLORIS.

HILARET.

WELL, Cloris, this is a mad frolic. I am horridly frighted at the thoughts of throwing myself into the power of a young fellow.

Clo. It is natural to us to be frighted at first: I was in a little terror myself on my wedding-day, but it went all off before the next morning. A husband, like other bugbears, loses all his horror when we once know him thoroughly.

Hil. But if he should not prove a good husband—

Clo. Then you must not prove a good wife——If he keeps a mistress, do you keep a gallant; if he stay out with his friends at a tavern, do you be merry with your friends at home.

Hil. You give fine advice indeed.

Clo. Upon my word, Madam, it was such as I followed myself. I had a rogue of a husband that robbed me of all I had, and kept a mistress under my nose: but I was even with him; for it hath been ever my opinion, that a husband, like a courtier, who is above doing the duties of his office, should keep a deputy.

Hil. But suppose you had been in love with your husband?

Clo. Why so I was, Madam, as long as he deserv'd it: but love, like fire, naturally goes out when it hath nothing to feed on.

Hil. Well, if it be possible to be assured of a lover's sincerity, I think I may be assured of Constant: at least it is advisable to persuade myself of his truth whom I should love, tho' he wanted it:—Ah, Cloris! you may as easily remove a rock as a woman's passion——

Clo. And yet it is very often built on a sandy foundation.

Hil. Love is the same, whatever be its object: we as often like men for imaginary as real perfections; we all look through a prismatic glass in love, and whatever beauties we have once fancied, we never lose the opinion of—our amorous faith is as implicit as our religious.

Clo. If I have any judgment in mankind, and I am sure I have had some experience in them, your passion could have been no where better fixed: captain Constant hath all the qualities any woman can desire. He hath youth, beauty, vigour, gallantry, constancy, and, as Mr. Cowley says, a long, &c.

SCENE II.

POLITIC, HILARET, CLORIS.

Pol. Ay, there it goes, tick tack, tick tack, like the

pendulum of a clock. What mischief are you hatching, hey?——It is impossible that two women should be together without producing mischief.

Clo. I always thought a man and woman the more likely to produce mischief: and yet I think them the properer company.

Pol. I suppose you will tell my daughter so too.

Hil. Indeed, papa, she need not: for I was always of that opinion.

Pol. You was! but I shall prevent your wishes—

Hil. You may be mistaken. [*Aside.*

Pol. I do not believe the head of cardinal Fleury can be more perplexed, than mine is with this girl. To govern yourself is greater than to govern a kingdom, said an old philosopher: and to govern a woman is greater than to govern twenty kingdoms.

Hil. I wish you would not perplex yourself with cardinals or kingdoms; I wish you would mind your own business instead of the public's; dear papa, don't give yourself any more trouble about Don Carlos, unless you can get him for a son-in-law.

Pol. Not if I were a king. I will make you a little sensible of who Don Carlos is——

Hil. Nay, I do not understand one word of your politics.

Pol. I am sorry you do not—A newspaper would be a more profitable entertainment for you than a romance. You would find more in one half-sheet than in the grand Cyrus.

Hil. More lies, very probably——You know I do read the home paragraphs in the Whitehall Evening Post: and that's the best of them.

Pol. If you would be informed in these matters, you must read all that come out: about forty every day, and some days fifty: and, of a Saturday, about fourscore.

Would you continue in such a course but one twelve-month, I do not question but you might know as much of politics as—any man that comes to our coffee-house. And I had rather see you a politician than a woman of quality.

Hil. If I may speak freely, it would have been better for me that you had been less a politician.

Pol. You are deceived, very much deceived; but some fool hath put this into your head. You may live to see me one of the greatest men in England. Did I not say at the siege of Gibraltar that, within one three years, we should see whether we should have peace or no. And yet I am an Ignoramus; I know nothing, I warrant you; I had better have continued a merchant, no doubt: but then what had become of my projects? Where had been all those twenty different schemes which I have now ready to lay before the parliament, greatly for my own honour, and the interest of my country? Harkye, I have contrived a method to pay off the debts of the nation, without a penny of money.

Hil. And you will not get a penny by it, I dare swear.

Pol. No, no, no, certainly: tho' I would not take twenty thousand pounds for the advantage which will arise to me from it. It hath lain these three years in a friend's hands of mine of the House of Commons; who assured me, not many days ago, that it should be taken shortly into consideration, tho' he believed it could not be this sessions.

Hil. Nor this age, I am confident. [*Aside.*

Pol. And how do you think it is to be compassed? why, by procuring a machine to carry ships by land about a hundred miles: and so prosecute the East India trade through the Mediterranean.

Hil. I wish you success, Sir: but I must take my leave of you, for it grows very late: so good night, papa. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

POLITIC *solus.*

I cannot rest for these preparations of the Turks: what can be their design?——It must be against the emperor. ——Ay, ay, we shall have another campaign in Hungary. I wish we may feel no other effect from them. ——Should the Turkish gallies once find a passage through the Streights, who can tell the consequence? I hope I shall not live to see that day.

SCENE IV.

POLITIC, DABBLE.

Dab. We are all undone, neighbour Politic! all blown up! all ruined!

Pol. Protect us——what is the matter? No news of the Turks, I hope!

Dab. An express is arrived with an account of the Dauphin's death.

Pol. Worse and worse—This is a finishing stroke, indeed! Mr. Dabble, I take this visit exceeding kind—pray be pleased to sit: we must confabulate on this important accident.——Pray light your pipe:—I wish this may not retard the introduction of Don Carlos into Italy.

Dab. I wish it may.

Pol. How.

Dab. I wish Don Carlos do not prove a more formidable power than is imagined.

Pol. Don Carlos a formidable power, Mr. Dabble?

Dab. I wish we do not find him so.

Pol. Sir, I look on Don Carlos to be an errant blank in the affairs of Europe——and let me observe to you, the Turks give much greater uneasiness than Don Carlos can; what the design of their preparations can be is difficult to determine.——This I know, that I know nothing of the matter.

Dab. I think we have no need to travel so far for apprehensions, when danger is so near us: the prospect of affairs in the West is so black, that I see no reason to regard the East: the monstrous power which Don Carlos may be possessed of by the death of the Dauphin——

Pol. Rather, the monstrous power which the emperor may be possessed of.

Dab. The emperor—ah! } *Both shake their heads*
Pol. Don Carlos truly! } *at one another.*

Dab. I would fain ask one question, Mr. Politic. Pray, how large do you take Tuscany to be?——

Pol. How large do I take Tuscany to be——let me see——Tuscany, ay; how large do I take it to be——hum——Faithful!——bring some more tobacco. How large do I take it to be——why, truly, I take it to be about as large as the kingdom of France——or something larger.——

Dab. As large as the kingdom of France——you might as well compare this tobacco pipe to a cannon. Why, Tuscany, Sir, is only a town, a garrison to be admitted into Tuscany; that is, into the town of Tuscany———

Pol. Sir, I will convince you of your error.——Here, Faithful, bring a map of Europe hither.——

Dab. I did not think, Mr. Politic, you had been so ignorant in geography.

Pol. I believe I know as much as you, or any one, of it.

SCENE V.

POLITIC, DABBLE, FAITHFUL.

Faith. Sir, Sir, your daughter is gone out of the house, no one knows whither.

Pol. And give me leave to tell you, Sir, I wish your own ignorance in public affairs doth not appear to our cost.

Dab. Sir, I wish you would send for the map.

Pol. Map me no maps, Sir, my head is a map, a map of the whole world.———

Faith. Sir, your daughter——

Dab. If your head be a map, it is a very erroneous one.

Pol. Sir, I would not have call'd Tuscany a town in a coffee-house, to have been master of it.

Dab. Nor I have compared it to France, to have been king of both.

SCENE VI.

POLITIC, DABBLE, FAITHFUL, PORER.

Por. Great news, gentlemen, all's safe again.

Pol. More deaths?

Por. An express is arriv'd with a certain account of the Dauphin's being in good health.

Dab. This is good news indeed.

Pol. Is there a certain confirmation?

Por. Very certain—I came this moment from the Secretary's office.

Pol. Dear Mr. Porer, you are the welcomest man alive ——This news makes me the happiest creature living.

Faith. I wish, Sir, my news may not prevent it. Your daughter, Sir, Miss Hilaret, is gone out of the house, and no one knows whither.

Pol. My daughter gone! that is some allay to my happiness, I confess: but the loss of twenty daughters would not balance the recovery of the Dauphin.—However, gentlemen, you will excuse me, I must go inquire into this affair.

Dab. Be not concerned at any thing, after what you have heard: let the private give way to the public ever.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII. *The Street.*

SOTMORE, RAMBLE.

Sot. Why, thou wilt not leave us yet, and sneak away to some nasty little whore? A pox confound them, they have spoiled so many of my companions, and forc'd me to bed sober at three o'clock in the morning so often—that if the whole sex were going to the devil, I would drink a bumper to their good journey.

Ramb. And I would go thither along with them. The dear charming creatures! Woman! It is the best word that ever was invented. There's music, there's magic in it. Mark Antony knew well to lay out his money, and when he gave the world for a woman——he bought a lumping pennyworth.

Sot. If he had given it for a hogshead of good claret, I would have commended the purchase more.

Ramb. Wine is only the prologue to love: it only serves to raise our expectations. The bottle is but a

passport to the bed of pleasure. Brutes drink to quench their appetites——but lovers to enflame them.

Sot. 'Tis pity the generous liquor should be used to no better a purpose.

Ramb. It is the noblest use of the grape, and the greatest glory of Bacchus is to be page to Venus.

Sot. Before I go into a tavern again with a man who will sneak away after the first bottle, may I be cursed with the odious sight of a pint as long as I live: or become a member of a city club, where men drink out of thimbles, that the fancy may be heightened by the wine, about the same time that the understanding is improved by the conversation: I'll sooner drink coffee with a politician, tea with a fine lady, or 'rack punch with a fine gentleman, than thus be made a whetstone of, to sharpen my friends' inclinations, that some little strumpet may enjoy the benefit of that good humour which I have raised.

Ramb. Why, thou art as ill-natured and as angry as a woman would be, who was disappointed in the last moment, when her expectations were at the highest.

Sot. And have I not the same cause?

Ramb. Truly, honest Nol, when a man's reason begins to stagger I think him the properest company for the women: one bottle more, and I had been fit for no company at all.

Sot. Then thou had'st been carried off with glory.—An honest fellow should no more quit the tavern while he can stand than a soldier should the field; but you fine gentlemen are for preserving yourselves safe from both for the benefit of the ladies.——'Sdeath! I'll use you with the same scorn that a soldier would a coward: so, Sir, when I meet you next, be not surprised if I walk on the other side the way.

Ramb. Nay, pr'ythee, dear Silenus, be not so enraged;

I'll but take one refreshing turn, and come back to the tavern to thee. Burgundy shall be the word, and I will fight under thy command till I drop.

Sot. Now thou art an honest fellow—and thou shalt toast whomsoever thou pleasest—We'll bumper up her health, till thou dost enjoy her in imagination. To a warm imagination there is no bawd like a bottle. It shall throw into your arms the soberest prude or wildest coquette in town; thou shalt rifle her charms in spite of her art. Nay, thou shalt increase her charms more than her art: and, when thou art surfeited with the luscious pleasure, wake coolly the next morning without any wife by your side, or any fear of children.

Ramb. What a luscious picture hast thou drawn!

Sot. And thou shalt have it, boy! Thou shalt triumph over her virtue, if she be a woman of quality—or raise her blushes, if she be a common strumpet. I'll go order a new recruit upon the table, and expect you with impatience.—'Fill every glass.' [*Sings.*]

[*Exit* Sotmore.

SCENE VIII.

RAMBLE *solus.*

Ramb. Sure this fellow's whole sensation lies in his throat: for he is never pleased but when he is swallowing: and yet the hogshead will be as soon drunk with the liquor it contains as he. I wish it had no other effect upon me. Pox of my paper scull! I have no sooner buried the wine in my belly than its spirit rises in my head.——I am in a very proper humour for a frolic; if my good genius, and her evil one, would but send some lovely female in my way——ha! the devil hath heard my prayers.

SCENE IX.

RAMBLE, HILARET.

Hil. Was ever any thing so unfortunate! to lose this wench in the scuffle, and not know a step of the way ——What shall I do?

Ramb. By all my love of glory, an adventure.

Hil. Ha! who's that? who are you, Sir?

Ramb. A cavalier, Madam, a knight-errant rambling about the world in quest of adventures. To plunder widows and ravish virgins; to lessen the number of bullies, and increase that of cuckolds, are the obligations of my profession.

Hil. I wish you all the success so worthy an adventurer deserves. [*Going.*

Ramb. But hold, Madam, I am but just sallied, and you are the first adventure I have met with.

[*Takes hold of her.*

Hil. Let me go, I beseech you, Sir, I will have nothing to say to any of your profession.

Ramb. That's unkind, Madam: for, as I take it, our professions are pretty nearly allied, and, like priest and nun, we are proper company for one another.

Hil. My profession, Sir!

Ramb. Yes, Madam, I believe I am no stranger to the honourable rules of your order. Nay, 'tis probable I may know your abbess too; for, tho' I have not been in town a week, I am acquainted with half a dozen.

Hil. Nothing but your drink, Sir, and ignorance of my quality, could excuse this rudeness.

Ramb. Whu——[*whistles*] Ignorance of your quality! (The daughter of some person of rank, I warrant her.)

[*Aside.*] Look'e my dear, I shall not trouble myself with your quality: It is equal to me whether your father rode in a coach and six, or drove it.——I have had as much joy in the arms of an honest boatswain's wife, as with a relation of the Great Mogul.

Hil. You look, Sir, so much like a gentleman, that I am persuaded this usage proceeds only from your mistaking me. I own it looks a little odd for a woman of virtue to be found alone in the street, at this hour——

Ramb. Yes, it does look a little odd indeed. [*Aside.*

Hil. But when you know my story, I am confident you will assist me, rather than otherwise. I have this very night escaped with my maid from my father's house; and, as I was going to put myself into the hands of my lover, a scuffle happening in the street, and both running away in a fright to avoid it, we unluckily separated from each other.——Now, Sir, I rely on the generosity of your temper to assist an unhappy woman; for which you shall not only have my thanks, but those of a very pretty fellow into the bargain.

Ramb. I am that very pretty fellow's very humble servant. But I find I am too much in love with you myself, to preserve you for another: had you proved what I at first took you for, I should have parted with you easily; but I read a coronet in your eyes; (she shall be her grace if she pleases, I had rather give her a title than money.) [*Aside.*

Hil. Nay, now you mistake me as widely as you did at first.

Ramb. Nay, by this frolic, Madam, you must be either a woman of quality, or a woman of the town——Your low, mean people, who govern themselves by rules, dare not attempt these noble flights of pleasure. Flights only to be reached by those who boldly soar above reputation.

Hil. This is the maddest fellow. [*Aside.*

Ramb. So, my dear, whether you be of quality or no quality, you and I will go drink one bottle together at the next tavern.

Hil. I have but one way to get rid of him. [*Aside.*

Ramb. Come, my dear angel. Oh! this dear soft hand.

Hil. Could I be but assur'd that my virtue would be safe.

Ramb. No where safer. I'll give thee any thing in pawn for it—(but my watch.) [*Aside.*

Hil. And then my reputation——

Ramb. The night will take care of that—Virtue and reputation! These whores have learnt a strange cant since I left England. [*Aside.*

Hil. But will you love me always?

Ramb. Oh! for ever and ever, to be sure.

Hil. But will you——too.

Ramb. Yes, I will——too.

Hil. Will you promise to be civil?

Ramb. Oh! yes, yes; (I was afraid she would have asked me for money.)

Hil. Well, then I will venture.—Go you to that corner tavern, I'll follow you.

Ramb. Excuse me, Madam, I know my duty better—so, if you please, I'll follow you.

Hil. I insist on your going first.

Ramb. And so you'll leave me in the lurch: I see you are frighted at the roughness of my dress, but, fore gad, I am an honest tar, and the devil take me if I bilk you.

Hil. I don't understand you.

Ramb. Why, then, Madam, here is a pound of as good tea as ever come out of the Indies; you understand that, I hope.

Hil. I shall take no bribes, Sir.

Ramb. Refuse the tea! I like you now indeed; for you cannot have been long upon the town, I'm sure. But I grow weary with impatience. If you are a modest woman, and insist on the ceremony of being carried, with all my heart.

Hil. Nay, Sir, do not proceed to rudeness.

Ramb. In short, my passion will be dallied with no longer. Do you consider I am just come on shore, that I have seen nothing but men and the clouds this half year, and a woman is as ravishing a sight to me as the returning sun to Greenland. I am none of your puisny beaus, that can look on a fine woman, like a surfeited man on an entertainment. My stomach's sharp, and you are an ortolan; and, if I do not eat you up, may salt beef be my fare for ever. [*Takes her in his arms.*

Hil. I'll alarm the watch.

Ramb. You'll be better-natur'd than that. At least, to encounter danger is my profession; so have at you, my little Venus—if you don't consent, I'll ravish you.

Hil. Help there! a rape, a rape!

Ramb. Hush, hush, you call too loud, people will think you are in earnest.

Hil. Help, a rape!

SCENE X.

RAMBLE, HILARET, STAFF, WATCH.

Staff. That's he there, seize him.

Ramb. Stand off, ye scoundrels!

Staff. Ay, Sir, you shou'd have stood off——Do you charge this man with a rape, Madam?

Hil. I am frighted out of my senses——

Staff. A plain case!——The rape is sufficiently

proved.——What, was the devil in you, to ravish a woman in the street thus?

Hil. Oh! dear Mr. Constable, all I desire is, that you would see me safe home.

Staff. Never fear, Madam, you shall not want evidence. [*Aside to her.*

Ramb. (Nay, if I must lodge with these gentlemen, I am resolved to have your company, Madam.) Mr. Constable, I charge that lady with threatening to swear a rape against me, and laying violent hands upon my person, whilst I was inoffensively walking along the street.

Hil. How! villain!

Ramb. Ay, ay, Madam, you shall be made a severe example of. The laws are come to a fine pass truly, when a sober gentleman can't walk the streets for women.

Hil. For Heaven's sake, Sir, don't believe him.

Staff. Nay, Madam, as we have but your bare affirmation on both sides, we cannot tell which way to incline our belief; that will be determin'd in the morning by your characters—I would not have you dejected, you shall not want a character. [*Aside to her.*

Hil. This was the most unfortunate accident, sure, that ever befel a woman of virtue.

Staff. If you are a woman of virtue, the gentleman will be hanged for attempting to rob you of it. If you are not a woman of virtue, why you will be whipped for accusing a gentleman of robbing you of what you had not to lose.

Hil. Oh! this unfortunate fright——But, Mr. Constable, I am very willing that the gentleman should have his liberty, give me but mine.

Staff. That request, Madam, is a very corroborating circumstance against you.

Ramb. Guilt will ever discover itself.

Staff. Bring them along.

1 *Watch.* She looks like a modest woman, in my opinion.

Ramb. Confound all your modest women, I say,—a man can have nothing to do with a modest woman, but he must be married, or hang'd for't. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

SCENE, JUSTICE SQUEEZUM'S; *a table, pen, ink, paper, &c.*

SQUEEZUM, QUILL.

SQUEEZUM.

DID Mother Bilkum refuse to pay my demands, say you?

Quill. Yes, Sir; she says she does not value your worship's protection of a farthing, for that she can bribe two juries a year to acquit her in Hick's Hall, for half the money which she hath paid you within these three months.

Squeez. Very fine; I shall shew her that I understand something of juries, as well as herself. Quill, make a memorandum against Mother Bilkum's trial, that we may remember to have the pannel No. 3; they are a set of good men and true, and hearken to no evidence but mine.

Quill. Sir, Mr. Snap, the bailiff's follower, hath set up a shop, and is a freeholder. He hopes your worship will put him into a pannel on the first vacancy.

Squeez. Minute him down for No. 2. I think half

of that pannel are bailiff's followers. Thank Heaven, the laws have not excluded those butchers.——

Quill. No, Sir, the law forbids butchers to be jurymen, but does not forbid jurymen to be butchers.

Squeez. Quill, d'ye hear! look out for some new recruit for the pannel No. 1. We shall have a swinging vacancy there the next sessions.—Truly, if we do not take some care to regulate the juries in the Old Bailey, we shall have no juries for Hick's Hall.

Quill. Very true, Sir. But that pannel hath been more particularly unfortunate. I believe I remember it hanged, at least twice over.

Squeez. Ay, poor fellows! We must all take our chance, Quill. The man, who would live in this world, must not fear the next. The chance of peace is doubtful as that of war; and they, who will make their fortunes at home, should entertain no more dread of the bench, than a soldier should of the field. We are all militant here; and a halter hath been fatal to many a great man, as well as a bullet.

SCENE II.

SQUEEZUM, QUILL, STAFF.

Quill. Sir, here's Mr. Staff, the reforming constable.

Staff. An't please your worship, we have been at the gaming-house in the alley, and have taken six prisoners, whereof we discharged two who had your worship's licence.

Squeez. What are the others?

Staff. One is an half-pay officer; another an attorney's clerk; and the other two are young gentlemen of the Temple.

Squeez. Discharge the officer and the clerk; there is

nothing to be got by the army or the law: the one hath no money, and the other will part with none. But be not too forward to quit the Templars.

Staff. Asking your worship's pardon, I don't care to run my finger into the lion's mouth. I would not willingly have to do with any limb of the law.

Squeez. Fear not; these bear no nearer affinity to lawyers than a militia regiment of squires do to soldiers; the one gets no more by his gown than the other by his sword. These are men that bring estates to the Temple, instead of getting them there.

Staff. Nay, they are bedaub'd with lace as fine as lords.

Squeez. Never fear a lawyer in lace.——The lawyer that sets out in lace always ends in rags.

Staff. I'll secure them.—We went to the house where your worship commanded us, and heard the dice in the street; but there were two coaches with coronets on them at the door, so we thought it proper not to go in.

Squeez. You did right. The laws are turnpikes, only made to stop people who walk on foot, and not to interrupt those who drive through them in their coaches.——The laws are like a game at loo, where a blaze of court cards is always secure, and the knaves are the safest cards in the pack.

Staff. We have taken up a man for rape too.

Squeez. What is he?

Staff. I fancy he's some great man; for he talks French, sings Italian, and swears English.

Squeez. Is he rich?

Staff. I believe not, for we can't get a farthing out of him.

Squeez. A certain sign that he is. Deep pockets are like deep streams; and money, like water, never runs faster than in the shallows.

Staff. Then there's another misfortune too.

Squeez. What's that?

Staff. The woman will not swear anything against him.

Squeez. Never fear that; I'll make her swear enough for my purpose. What sort of a woman is she?

Staff. A common whore, I believe.

Squeez. The properest person in the world to swear a rape. A modest woman is as shy of swearing a rape, as a gentleman is of swearing a battery.——We will make her swear enough to frighten him into a composition, a small part of which will satisfy the woman. So go bring them before me.—But hold! have you been at home since I sent a prisoner thither this morning?

Staff. Yes, an't please your worship.

Squeez. And what says he?

Staff. He threatens us confoundedly! and says you have committed him without any accusation. I'm afraid we shall get nothing out of him.

Squeez. We'll try him till noon, however.

SCENE III.

SQUEEZUM, MRS. SQUEEZUM.

Mrs. Squeez. I desire, Mr. Squeezum, you would finish all your dirty work this morning; for I am resolv'd to have the house to myself in the afternoon.

Squeez. You shall, my dear; and I shall be obliged to you, if you can let me have the coach this morning.

Mrs. Squeez. I shall use it myself.

Squeez. Then I must get horses put into the chariot.

Mrs. Squeez. I am not determined whether I shall use the coach or chariot; so it is impossible you should have either. Besides, a hack is the properest to do business

in; and as I cannot spare you a servant, will look better.

Squeez. Well, child, well, it shall be so.—Let me only beg the favour of dining a little sooner than ordinary.

Mrs. Squeez. That is so far from being possible, that we cannot dine till an hour later than usual, because I must attend at an auction, or I shall lose a little China bason which is worth its weight in jewels, and it is probable I may get it for its weight in gold, which will not be above one hundred guineas; and those you must give me, child.

Squeez. A hundred guineas for a china bason! Oh, the devil take the East India trade! The clay of the one Indies runs away with the gold of the other.

Mrs. Squeez. I may buy it for less; but it is good to have rather too much money about one, than too little.

Squeez. In short, I cannot support your extravagance.

Mrs. Squeez. I do not desire you to support my extravagance.

Squeez. I wish you would not.

Mrs. Squeez. Thus stands the case: you say I am extravagant; I say I am not: sure, my word will balance yours every where but at Hick's Hall.—And hark'ye, my dear; if, whenever I ask for a trifle, you object my extravagance to me, I'll be reveng'd; I'll blow you up, I'll discover all your midnight intrigues, your protecting ill houses, your bribing juries, your snacking fees, your whole train of rogueries. If you do not allow me what I ask, I'll bid fair to enter on my jointure, Sir.

Squeez. Well, my dear, this time you shall be indulged.—Trust a thief or lawyer with your purse, a whore or physician with your constitution, but never trust a dangerous secret with your wife; for, when once you have put it into her power to hang you, the sooner you are hanged the better. [*Aside.*

SCENE IV.

SQUEEZUM, QUILL, MRS. SQUEEZUM, STAFF, WATCH, RAMBLE, HILARET.

Staff. An't please your worship, here is a gentleman hath committed a rape last night on this young woman.

Squeez. How! a rape! Hath he committed a rape on you, child?

Mrs. Squeez. This may be worth hearing. [*Aside.*

Hil. Sir, I have nothing to say against him. I desire you would give us both our liberty. He was a little frolicsome last night, which made me call for these peoples' help; and when once they had taken hold of us, they would not suffer us to go away.

Squeez. They did their duty.——The power of discharging lieth in us, and not in them.

Ramb. Sir.——

Squeez. Sir, I beg we may not be interrupted. Hark'ye, young woman, if this gentleman hath treated you in an ill manner, do not let your modesty prevent the execution of justice. Consider, you will be guilty yourself of the next offence he commits; and upon my word, by his looks, it is probable he may commit a dozen rapes within this week.

Hil. I assure you he is innocent.

Squeez. Mr. Staff, what say you to this affair?

Staff. May it please your worship, I saw the prisoner behave in a very indecent manner, and heard the woman say he had ravish'd away her senses.

Squeez. Fie upon you, child, will you not swear this?

Hil. No, Sir; but I shall swear something against you, unless you discharge us.

Squeez. That cannot be, Madam; the fact is too plain.

If you will not swear now, the prisoner must be kept in custody till you will.

Staff. If she will not swear, we can swear enough to convict him.

Ramb. Very fine, faith! This justice is worse than a grand inquisitor. Pray, honest, formidable Sir, what private pique have you against me, that you would compel the lady to deserve the pillory, in order to promote me higher?

Squeez. My dear, did you ever see such a ravishing look as this fellow hath? Sir, if I was a judge, I would hang you without any evidence at all. They are such fellows as these who sow dissension between man and wife, and keep up the names of cuckold and bastard in the kingdom.

Ramb. Nay, if that be all you accuse me of, I will confess it freely, I have employ'd my time pretty well. Though as I do not remember ever to have done you the honour of dubbing, Mr. Justice, I cannot see why you should be so incensed against me; for I do not imagine you any otherwise an enemy to these amusements than a popish priest to sin, or a doctor to disease.

Mrs. Squeez. You are very civil, Sir, to threaten to dub my husband before my face.

Ramb. I ask pardon, Madam; I did not know with whom I had the honour to be in company: it was always against my inclination to affront a lady; but a woman of your particular merit must have claimed the most particular respect.

Mrs. Squeez. I should have expected no rudeness from a gentleman of your appearance, and would much rather attribute any misbecoming word to inadvertency than design.

Ramb. Madam, I know not how to thank so much goodness; but do assure you, I would buy an introduc-

tion to your acquaintance at a much greater danger than this prosecution, which, I believe, you already see the malice of. I hope, Madam, I stand already acquitted in your opinion.

Mrs. Squeez. I hope, Sir, it will only appear to have been a frolic: I must own I have been always a great enemy to force——since there are so many willing.

Ramb. So, I find there is no danger of a rape here. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Squeez. Well, child, can you find anything against this gentleman?

Squeez. The woman is difficult of confessing in public: but I fancy when I examine her in private, I may get it out of her.—So, Mr. Constable, withdraw your prisoner.

Mrs. Squeez. Nay, he appears so much of a gentleman, that till there be stronger evidence, I will take charge of him.——Come, Sir, you shall go drink a dish of tea with me.—You may stay without.

[*To the* Constable, *&c.*

Ramb. This kindness of yours, Madam, will be an encouragement to offenders.

SCENE V.

SQUEEZUM, HILARET.

Squeez. Come, come, child, you had better take the oath, though you are not altogether so sure. Justice should be rigorous. It is better for the public that ten innocent people should suffer, than that one guilty should escape: and it becomes every good person to sacrifice their conscience to the benefit of the public.

Hil. Would you persuade me to perjure myself?

Squeez. By no means. Not for the world. Perjury indeed! Do you think I do not know what perjury is

better than you? He did attempt to ravish you, you own; very well. He that attempts to do you any injury, hath done it in his heart. Besides, a woman may be ravished, ay, and many a woman hath been ravished, ay, and men been hanged for it——when she hath not certainly known she hath been ravished.

Hil. You are a great casuist in conscience. But you may spare yourself any further trouble: for I assure you it will be in vain.

Squeez. I see where your hesitation hangs; you are afraid of spoiling your trade.—You think severity to a customer will keep people from your house.—Pray, answer me one question—How long have you been upon the town?

Hil. What do you mean?

Squeez. Come, come, I see you are but a novice, and I like you the better: for yours is the only business wherein people do not profit by experience.—You are very handsome—It is a pity you should continue in this abandoned state.—Give me a kiss;—Nay, be not coy to me.——I protest, you are as full of beauty as the rose is of sweetness, and I of love as its stalk is full of briars——Oh! that we were as closely joined together too.

Hil. Why, you will commit a rape yourself, Mr. Justice.

Squeez. If I thought you would prove constant, I would take you into keeping: for I have not liked a woman so much these many years.

Hil. I will humour this old villain, I am resolved.

[*Aside.*

Squeez. What think you, could you be constant to a vigorous, healthy, middle-aged man, hey!—Could this buy thy affections off from a set of idle rascals, who carry their gold upon their backs, and have pockets as empty as their heads? Fellows who are greater curses on a woman than the vapours; for as those per-

suade her into imaginary diseases, these present her with real.——Let thy silence give consent: here, take this purse as an earnest of what I'll do for you.

Hil. Well, and what shall I do for this?

Squeez. You shall do—You shall do nothing; I will do. I will be a verb active, and you shall be a verb passive.

Hil. I wish you be not of the neuter gender.

Squeez. Why, you little arch rogue, do you understand Latin, hussey?

Hil. A little, Sir! My father was a country parson, and gave all his children a good education. He taught his daughters to write and read himself.

Squeez. What, have you sisters, then?

Hil. Alack-a-day, Sir! sixteen of us, and all in the same way of business.

Squeez. Ay, this it is to teach daughters to write. I would as soon put a sword into the hands of a madman, as a pen into those of a woman; for a pen in the hand of a woman is as sure an instrument of propagation, as a sword in that of a madman is of destruction. [*Aside.*]——Sure, my dear, the spirit of love must run very strongly in the blood of your whole family.

Hil. Oh, Sir, it was a villainous man of war that harboured near us.—My poor sisters were ruined by the officers, and I fell a martyr to the chaplain.

Squeez. Ay, ay, the sailors are as fatal to our women as the soldiers are. One Venus rose from the sea, and thousands have set in it—But not Venus herself could compare to thee, my little honeysuckle?

Hil. Be not so hot, Sir.

Squeez. Bid the touchwood be cold behind the burning-glass. The touchwood is not more easily kindled by the sun, than I by your dear eyes.

Hil. The touchwood is not drier, I dare swear.

Squeez. But hark, I hear my wife returning.—Leave word with my clerk where I shall send to you—I will be the kindest of keepers, very constant, and very liberal.—

Hil. Two charming qualities in a lover!

Squeez. My pretty nosegay, you will find me vastly preferable to idle young rakehells. Besides, you are safe with me. You are as safe with a justice in England, as a priest abroad; gravity is the best cloak for sin in all countries.—Be sure to be punctual to the time I shall appoint you.

Hil. Be not afraid of me.

Squeez. Adieu, my pretty charmer. I shall burn with impatience.

SCENE VI.

SQUEEZUM *solus.*

Go thy way for a charming girl! Now if I can get her at this wild fellow's expence, I shall have performed the part of a shrewd justice; for I would make others pay for my sins as well as their own. I fancy my wife hath sufficiently frightened him by this, and that he will truckle to any terms to be acquitted; for I must own she will pump a man better than I.——Oh! here they come. I must deal with my gentleman now in another style.

SCENE VII.

SQUEEZUM, MRS. SQUEEZUM, RAMBLE.

Ramb. Well, Sir, is the lady determined to swear stoutly?

Squeez. Truly, it is hard to say what she determines; she's gone to ask the advice of a divine and a lawyer.

Ramb. Then the odds are against me: for the lawyer will certainly advise her to swear; and it is possible the priest may not contradict her in it.

Squeez. It is indeed a ticklish point, and it were adviseable to make it up as soon as possible. The first loss is always the least. It is better to wet your coat than your skin, and to run home when the clouds begin to drop, than in the middle of the storm. In short, it were better to give a brace of hundred pounds to make up the matter now than to venture the consequence. I am heartily concerned to see gentlemen in such a misfortune. I am sorry the age is so corrupt. Really I expect to see some grievous and heavy judgment fall on the nation. We are as bad as ever Sodom and Gomorrah were; and I wish we may not be as miserable.

Ramb. Heark'e, justice; I take a sermon to be the first punishment which a man undergoes after conviction. It is very hard I must be condemned to it before-hand.

Mrs. Squeez. Nay, Sir, I am sure Mr. Squeezum speaks for your good.——I shall get a necklace out of this affair. [*Aside.*

Squeez. Ay, that I am sure I do: my interest sways not one way or the other.—I would, were I in that gentleman's circumstances, do what I advise him to do.

Ramb. Faith, Sir, that I must doubt: for, were you in my circumstances, you would not be worth the money.

Squeez. Nay, Sir, now you jest with me; a gentleman can never be at a loss for such a trifle.

Ramb. Faith, Sir, you mistake. I know a great many gentlemen not worth three farthings. He that resolves to be honest cannot resolve not to be poor.

Squeez. A gentleman, and poor; Sir, they are contradictions. A man may as well be a scholar without learning, as a gentleman without riches. But I have no time to dally with you. If you do not understand good

usage, while it is dealt you, you may, when you feel the reverse. The affair may now be made up for a trifle; the time may come when your whole fortune would be too little.—An hour's delay in the making up an offence is as dangerous as in the sewing up of a wound.

Ramb. Well, you have over-persuaded me; I'll take your advice.

Squeez. I'll engage you will not repent it——I don't question but you will regard me as your friend.

Ramb. That I do, indeed. And to give you the most substantial instance of it I will ask a favour, which is expected only from the most intimate friendship—which is, that you will be so kind to lend the money.

Squeez. Alack-a-day, Sir, I have not such a sum in my command. Besides, how must it look in me, who am an officer of justice, to lend a culprit money wherewith to evade justice! Alas, Sir, we must consider our characters in life, we must act up to our characters: and tho' I deviate a little from mine, in giving you advice, it would be entirely forsaking the character of a justice to give you money.

Mrs. Squeez. I wonder how you could ask it.

Ramb. Necessity obliges to any thing, Madam. Mr. Squeezum was so kind to shew me the necessity of giving money, and my pockets were so cruel to shew me the impossibility of it.

Squeez. Well, Sir, if you cannot pay for your transgressions like the rich, you must suffer for them like the poor.——Here, Constable!

SCENE VIII.

SQUEEZUM, MRS. SQUEEZUM, RAMBLE, STAFF, CONSTABLES.

Squeez. Take away your prisoner; keep him in safe custody till farther orders. If you come to a wiser resolution within these two hours, send me word: after that it will be too late.

Ramb. Heark'e Mr. Justice, you had better use me as you ought, and acquit me: for, if you do any thing which you cannot defend, hang me, if I am not revenged on you.

Squeez. Hang you!——I wish there may not be more meaning in those words than you imagine.

Ramb. 'Sdeath! you old rascal, I can scarce forbear rattling those old dry bones of thine till they crack thy wither'd skin.

Squeez. Bear evidence of this; I am threatened in the execution of my office.

Ramb. Come, honest Mr. Constable, Mr. Nocturnal Justice, let me go any where from this fellow—The night hath chosen a better justice than the day.

SCENE IX.

SQUEEZUM, MRS. SQUEEZUM.

Squeez. I am afraid I shall make nothing of this fellow at last. I have a mind to discharge him.

Mrs. Squeez. Oh! by no means; for I am sure he hath money.

Squeez. Yes, and so am I. But suppose he will not

part with it; it is impossible to take it from him: for there is no law yet in being to screen a justice of peace from a downright robbery.

Mrs. Squeez. Try him a little longer, however.

Squeez. I will till the afternoon; but, if he should not consent by that time, I must discharge him; for I have no hopes in the woman's swearing. She is discharged already.

Mrs. Squeez. I'll make him a visit at the constable's house, and try if I can alarm him into a composition. I may make him do more than you imagine.

Squeez. Do so, my dear——I doubt not your power—Good-morrow, honey.

Mrs. Squeez. But, my dear, pray remember the hundred guineas.

Squeez. Yes, yes, I shall remember them; they are not likely to be soon forgotten.—Follow me to my escritoire.

SCENE X.

MRS. SQUEEZUM *sola.*

Since you are sure of going to the devil, honest spouse, I'll take care to equip you with a pair of horns, that you may be as like one another as possible. This dear wild fellow must be mine, and shall be mine: I like him so well, that if he had even ravished me, on my conscience I should have forgiven him.

SCENE XI.

SCENE, MR. WORTHY'S.

WORTHY, POLITIC.

Wor. Upon my word, Mr. Politic, I am heartily sorry for this occasion of renewing our acquaintance. I can imagine the tenderness of a parent, tho' I never was one.

Pol. Indeed, neighbour Worthy, you cannot imagine half the troubles, without having undergone them. Matrimony baulks our expectations every way; and our children as seldom prove comforts to us as our wives. I had but two—whereof one was hanged long ago—and the other I suppose may be in a fair way by this.

Wor. In what manner did she escape from you?

Pol. She had taken leave of me to retire to rest, not half an hour before I heard of her departure. I impute it all to the wicked instructions of an imp of the devil called a chamber-maid, who is the companion of her flight.

Wor. But do you know of no lover?

Pol. Let me see——hey!——there hath been a fellow in a red coat, with whom she hath conversed for some time, in spite of my teeth.

Wor. Depend on it, he is the occasion of your loss. I can grant you a warrant against him, if you know his name, tho' I fear you are too late.

Pol. No, Sir, I am not too late; my daughter is an heiress, and you know the punishment for stealing an heiress. If I could hang the rascal, it would be some satisfaction.

Wor. That will be impossible, without her consent; and truly, if she be married, I would advise you to

follow the example of that emperor, who, when he discovered something worse than a marriage between one of his subjects and his daughter, chose rather to let him enjoy her as his own than punish him.

Pol. Pray where did that emperor reign?

Wor. I have almost forgotten, but I think it was one of the Greek emperors, or one of the Turks.

Pol. Bring me no example from the Turks, good Mr. Worthy, I find no such affinity in our interests. Sir, I dread and abhor the Turks. I wish we do not feel them before we are aware.

Wor. But, Sir——

Pol. But me no buts——what can be the reason of all this warlike preparation, which all our newspapers have informed us of? Yes, and the same newspapers a hundred times in the same words. Is the design against Persia? Is the design against Germany? Is the design against Italy?——Suppose we should see Turkish gallies in the channel? We may feel them, yes, we may feel them in the midst of our security? Troy was taken in its sleep, and so may we.

Wor. Sure, Sir, you are asleep, or in a dream—

Pol. Yes, yes, these things are called idle dreams—the justest apprehensions may be styled dreams—but let me tell you, Sir, men betray their own ignorance, often, in attacking that of other men.

Wor. But what is all this to your daughter?

Pol. Never tell me of my daughter, my country is dearer to me than a thousand daughters; should the Turks come among us, what would become of our daughters then? and our sons, and our wives, and our estates, and our houses, and our religion, and our liberty! —When a Turkish aga should command our nobility, and janizaries make grandfathers of lords, where should we look for Britain then?

Wor. Truly, where I may look for Mr. Politic now, in the clouds.

Pol. Give me leave, Sir, only to let you a little into the present state of Turkey.

Wor. I must beg to be excused, Sir; if I can be of any service to you, in relation to your daughter, you may command my attention: I may probably defend you from your own countrymen, but truly from the Turks I cannot.

Pol. I am glad to hear you have some apprehension of them, as well as myself.—That you are not so stupidly besotted, as I meet with some people at the coffee-house; but perhaps you are not enough apprized of the danger. Give me leave only to show you how it is possible for the Grand Signior to find an ingress into Europe.—Suppose, Sir, this spot I stand on to be Turkey—then here is Hungary—very well—here is France, and here is England—granted—then we will suppose he had possession of Hungary—what then remains but to conquer France, before we find him at our own coast.—But, Sir, this is not all the danger; now I will show you how he can come by sea to us.

Wor. Dear Sir, refer that to some other time; you have sufficiently satisfied me, I assure you.

Pol. It is almost time to go to the coffee-house—so, dear Mr. Worthy, I am your most obedient servant.

Wor. Mr. Politic, your very humble servant.

SCENE XII.

WORTHY, *solus.*

I recollect the dawnings of this political humour to have appeared when we were at Bath together; but it has risen finely in these ten years. What an enthusiasm

must it have arrived to, when it could make him forget the loss of his only daughter! The greatest part of mankind labour under one delirium or other: and Don Quixotte differed from the rest, not in madness, but the species of it. The covetous, the prodigal, the superstitious, the libertine, and the coffee-house politician, are all Quixottes in their several ways.

That man alone from madness free, we find,
Who, by no wild unruly passion blind,
To reason gives the conduct of his mind.

ACT III. SCENE I.

SCENE, *the Street.*

HILARET, CLORIS, *meeting.*

HILARET.

DEAR Cloris.

Clo. Dear Madam, is it you? you altogether?

Hil. Ay, ay, altogether, thank Heavens! I had like to have lost something, but all's safe, I assure you.

Clo. Ah! Madam, I wish it were.

Hil. What, don't you believe me?

Clo. I wish you could not me, or I myself. Poor Captain Constant———

Hil. What of him?

Clo. Oh! Madam!

Hil. Speak quickly, or kill me, which you please——

Clo. ——Is taken up for a rape.

Hil. How!

Clo. It is too true, his own servant told me.

Hil. His servant belied him, and so do you——Shew me where he is; if he be in a dungeon, I'll find him out.

Clo. Very generous, indeed, Madam! A king should sooner visit a prisoner for treason than I a lover for a rape.

Hil. It would be unpardonable in me to entertain so flagrant a belief, at the first hearing, against a man who hath given me such substantial proofs of his constancy: besides, an affair of my own makes me the more doubtful of the truth of this; but, if there appear any proof of such a fact, I will drive him for ever from my thoughts.

Clo. Yes, Madam, Justice Squeezum will take care to have him driven another way.

Hil. Justice Squeezum! Let me hug you for that information. Now, I can almost swear he is innocent: I have such an adventure to surprise you with; but let me not lose a moment——come, shew me the way.

Clo. Poor creature! she knows the way to her destruction too well——but it would be impertinence in a servant to put her out of it. [*Aside.*

SCENE II.

SCENE, *the* CONSTABLE'S *House.*

CONSTANT, *alone.*

Const. I begin to be of that philosopher's opinion, who said, that whoever will entirely consult his own happiness must be little concerned about the happiness of others. Good nature is Quixotism, and every Princess Micomicona will lead her deliverer into a cage. What had I to do to interpose? What harm did the misfortunes of an unknown woman bring me, that I should hazard my own happiness and reputation on her account?

—But sure, to swear a rape against me for having rescued her from a ravisher is an unparalleled piece of ingratitude.

SCENE III.

CONSTANT *and* MRS. STAFF.

Mrs. Staff. Will your honour please to drink a dram, or some 'rack punch?

Const. Dear Madam, do not trouble me; I can drink nothing.

Mrs. Staff. Truly, Sir, but I can. Not trouble you! I had never such a customer here before. You a captain charged with rape. I should sooner take you for some poor attorney, charged with forgery and perjury; or a travelling parson, with stealing a gown and cassock.

Const. Drink what you will, and I'll pay what you please.

Mrs. Staff. Thank your honour! your honour will not be offended, I hope——we stand at a great rent: and truly, since this gin act, trade hath been so dull, that I have often wished that my husband would live by the highway himself, instead of taking highwaymen.

Const. You are not the only wife who would give her husband this advice, I dare swear. Nay, were men all so uxorious to take it, Tyburn would have as much business as Doctors' Commons.

Mrs. Staff. I wish it had more; for we must stand and fall by one another; no business there, no business here; and truly, captain, 'tis with sorrow I say it, where we have one felon now, we had ten a year or two ago——I have not seen one prisoner brought in for a rape this fortnight, except your honour. I hope your handsel will be lucky.

SCENE IV.

CONSTANT, STAFF, MRS. STAFF.

Staff. Captain, your servant; I suppose you will be glad of company——here is a very civil gentleman, I assure you.

Mrs. Staff. More gentlemen! this is rare news indeed.

Const. I had rather be let alone.

Staff. I have but this one prison-room, Captain; besides, I assure you, this is no common fellow, but a very fine gentleman, a captain too—and as merry a one———

Const. What is the cause of his misfortune?

Staff. A rape, Captain, a rape—no dishonourable offence—I would not have brought any scoundrels into your honour's company; but rape and murder no gentleman need be ashamed of; and this is an honest brother ravisher—I have ravished women myself formerly: but a wife blunts a man's edge. When once you are married, you will leave off ravishing, I warrant you—to be bound in wedlock, is as good a security against rapes, as to be bound over to keep the peace is against murder.

Mrs. Staff. My husband will have his jest, I hope your honour will pardon him.

Staff. But here is the gentleman.

SCENE V.

CONSTANT, RAMBLE, STAFF, MRS. STAFF.

Const. Prodigious!

Ramb. Dear Constant!

Const. What in the name of wonder hath brought you to England?

Ramb. What in the devil's name hath brought thee to the Constable's?

Const. Only a rape, Sir; no dishonourable offence, as Mr. Constable hath it.

Ramb. You jest.

Staff. No, Sir, upon my word, the Captain is in earnest.

Ramb. Why, I should sooner have suspected ermine or lawn-sleeves. But I see gravity and hypocrisy are inseparable.——Well, give me thy hand, brother, for our fortunes agree exactly.

Staff. And will agree in the end, I don't question. This is not the first time of their meeting together on this account; a couple of old whore-masters, I warrant them. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Staff. Will your honours please to drink any punch, noble captains? it will keep up your spirits.

Staff. Don't force the gentlemen, wife, to drink whether they will or no.—I wish you well off this affair—in the meantime, whatever my house affords is at your service—and let me assure you, the more you drink, the less you will lament your misfortune.

Ramb. Spoken like a true philosopher.

SCENE VI.

CONSTANT, RAMBLE.

Ramb. But, dear Billy, I hope thou hast not really committed, hey?

Const. What I heartily repent of, I assure you. I rescued a woman in the street, for which she was so

kind to swear a rape against me; but it gives me no uneasiness equal to the pleasure I enjoy in seeing you.

Ramb. Ever kind and good-natur'd!

Const. Yet I wish our meeting had been on another occasion; for the freedom of your life makes me suspect the consequence of your confinement may be heavier than mine.

Ramb. I can't tell what the consequence may be, nor shall I trouble myself about it: but I assure thee, no sucking babe can be more innocent. If our cases differ in anything, it is in this, that my woman hath not sworn.

Const. This pleases me indeed! But, pray, how came you to leave the Indies, where I thought you had settled for life?

Ramb. Why, on the same account that I went thither, that I now am here, by which I live, and for which I live, a woman.

Const. A woman.

Ramb. Ay, a fine, young, rich woman! a widow with fourscore thousand pounds in her pocket——there's a North star to steer by.

Const. What is her name?

Ramb. Her name——her name is Ramble.

Const. What married?

Ramb. Ay, Sir; soon after you left the Indies, honest Mr. Ingot left the world, and me the heir to his wife with all her effects.

Const. I wish you joy, dear Jack; this thy good fortune hath so filled me with delight, that I have no room for my own sorrows.

Ramb. But I have not unfolded half yet.

Sot. [*without.*] Let two quarts of rum be made into punch, let it be hot—hot as hell.

Ramb. D'ye hear, we are in a fine condition, 'faith!

SCENE VII.

CONSTANT, RAMBLE, SOTMORE, STAFF.

Sot. Here they are, here are a brace of desponding whoremasters for you——Ramble, what, nothing to say in praise of the women; Mark Anthony made a fine bargain, hey, when he gave the world for a woman? 'Sdeath, if he had been alive now, I'd have waged six gallons of claret I had seen him hanged for a rape——as I shall very suddenly my two worthy friends.

Ramb. Hark'e, Sotmore, if you say any thing against the women, we'll cut your throat, and toss justice in a murder into the bargain.

Sot. Not speak against women! you shall as soon compel me not to drink: you shall sew up my lips, if you do either.——Here, you, let the punch be gotten ready.

Staff. It shall, an't please your honour. (This gentleman is a rare customer to a house; I wish he would commit a rape too.) [*Aside.*

SCENE VIII.

CONSTANT, RAMBLE, SOTMORE.

Const. You must not rail against the ladies, Sotmore, before Ramble; for he is a married man.

Ramb. And what is better, my wife is at the bottom of the sea.

Sot. And what is worse, all her effects are at the bottom of the sea with her.

Const. How!

Ramb. Faith! Sotmore hath spoken truth for once.

——Notwithstanding my pleasantry, the lady and her fortune are both gone together; she went to the other world fourscore thousand strong; and, if there be any such thing there, I don't question but she is married again by this time.

Sot. You would not take my advice. I have caution'd thee never to trust any thing on the same bottom with a woman. I would not ensure a ship that had a woman on board for double the price.—The sins of one woman are enough to draw down a judgment on a fleet.

Ramb. Here's a fellow, who, like a prude, makes sin a handle to his abuse.—Art thou not ashamed to mention sin—who art a cargo of iniquity? Why wilt thou fill thy venom'd mouth with that of others, when thou hast such stores of thy own?

Const. What occasioned your separating?

Ramb. A storm, and my ill stars. I left the ship wherein she was to dine with the captain of one of our convoy, when a sudden violent storm arising, I lost sight of her ship, and from that day have never seen or heard of her.

Sot. Nor ever will—I heartily hope. Tho' as for the innocent chests, those I wish deliver'd out of the deep. But the sea knows its own good: it will be sure to keep the money, though possibly it may refund the woman; for a woman will swim like a cork, and they are both of the same value; nay, the latter is the more valuable, as it preserves our wine, which women often spoil.

Const. Why, Sotmore, wine is the touchstone of all merit with thee, as gold is to a stock-jobber; and thou would'st as soon sell thy soul for a bottle, as he for a guinea.

Sot. Wine, Sir, is as apt a comparison to every thing that is good, as woman is to every thing that is bad.

Const. Fie, Sotmore! this railing against the ladies

will make your company as scandalous to gentlemen as railing at religion would to a parson.

Ramb. Right, Constant! they are my religion, I am the high-priest of the sex.

Sot. Women and religion! Women and the devil: he leaves his votaries in the lurch, and so do they.

Const. I fancy, Ramble, this friend of ours will turn parson one day or other——

Ramb. If he was not such a sot, I should think it possible.

Sot. Why, faith! I am almost superstitious enough to fancy this a judgment on thee for breaking thy word.—Did I not tell thee, thou wert strolling off to some little dirty whore! and you see the truth of my prophecy.

Ramb. Thou art in the right: it was not only a whore, but the most impudent of all whores——a modest whore.

Const. A modest whore! let her be married to an honest attorney, by all means.

Ramb. And sent together to people his majesty's plantations.

Sot. Modesty, now-a-days, as often covers impudence, as it doth ugliness. It is as uncertain a sign of virtue as quality is, or as fine clothes are of quality.

Ramb. Yet to do her right: the persuasions of the justice could not prevail with her to perjure herself.

Sot. Conscientious strumpet! she hopes to pick your pocket another time, which it were charity to thee to wish she might: for, if thou escapest this, she certainly will have an opportunity.

Ramb. Pray, honest Nol, how didst thou find us out? for a boy would as soon have sent for his schoolmaster when he was caught in an orchard as I for thee on this occasion.

Sot. Find you out! why the town rings of you——there is not a husband or guardian in it but what is

ready to get drunk for joy. If the woman be not gold proof, she will be bribed to swear against you. You are a nuisance, Sir! I don't believe he hath been in town six days, and he hath had above sixteen women.

Ramb. And they are a nobler pleasure than so many gallons which thou hast swallowed in that time.

Sot. Sir, I pay my vintner, and therefore do no injury.

Ramb. And, Sir, I do no injury: and therefore have no reason to pay.

Sot. Hey-day! is taking away a man's wife or daughter no injury?

Ramb. Not when the wife is weary of her husband, and the daughter longs for one.

Const. Art thou not ashamed, Sotmore, to throw a man's sins in his face, while he is suffering for them.

Sot. That is the time, Sir; besides, you see what an effect it hath on him: you might as well rail at a knight of the post in the pillory.

Ramb. Let him alone, the punch will be here immediately, and then he'll have no leisure to rail.

Sot. Is it not enough to make a man rail, to have parted with a friend happy in the night, and to find him the next morning in so fair a way to—Death and damnation! shew me the whore; I'll be revenged on her and the whole sex. If thou art to be hanged for ravishing her, I'll be hang'd for murdering her. Describe the little mischief to me. Is she tall, short, black, brown, fair? In what form hath the devil disguised himself.

Ramb. In a very beautiful one, I assure you: she hath the finest shape that ever was beheld, genteel to a miracle; then the brightest eyes that ever glanced on a lover, the prettiest little mouth, and lips as red as a cherry; and for her breasts, not snow, marble, lilies, alabaster, ivory, can come up to their whiteness; but their little, pretty, firm, round form, no art can imitate, no

thought conceive——Oh! Sotmore, I could die ten thousand millions of times upon them——

Sot. You are only likely to die once for them.

Const. All these raptures about a common whore, Ramble?

Sot. Ay, every woman he sees, they are all alike to him, modest or immodest, high or low, from the garret to the cellar, St. James's to the stews; find him but a woman, and he'll make an angel of her.—He hath the same taste for women, as a child for pictures, or a hungry glutton for an entertainment: every piece is a Venus, and every dish an ortolan.

Ramb. To say the truth of her, Sotmore must have allow'd her handsome, and I must allow her to have been a damn'd, confounded, common ——

SCENE IX.

CONSTANT, RAMBLE, SOTMORE, HILARET.

Ramb. Ha! conjur'd up, by Jupiter! Well, my little enemy, do the priest and lawyer consent—and will you swear—ha!

Hil. [*Not regarding* Ramble, *runs to* Constant.] My Constant!

Ramb. Hey-day! what, are we both in for ravishing the same woman;—I see by her fondness, he hath really ravished her.

Const. O Hilaret! this kindness of yours sinks me the deeper; can you bear to think on one accused of such a crime as I am?

Hil. Never to believe it can I bear.

Const. How shall I repay this goodness! Then by Heavens I am innocent. [*They talk apart.*

Ramb. Hey! the devil!——Is this Constant's mistress? Here will be fine work, i'faith! [*Aside.*

Sot. Is this the lady that did you the favour, Sir? [*To* Ramble.

Ramb. This the lady! No———why this is a woman of virtue; though she hath a great resemblance of the other, I must confess.

Sot. Then I suppose this is she whom Constant hath toasted this half year—his honourable mistress, with a pox.—Rare company for a man who is in prison for a rape!

Hil. And was you in that scuffle which parted me and my maid in Leicester Fields?

Const. It was there this unfortunate accident happened, while I was going to the place of our appointment.

Hil. It had like to have occasioned another to me, which, that I escaped, I am to thank this gentleman.

Ramb. Oh, Madam! your most obedient, humble servant. Was it you, dear Madam?

Const. Ha! is it possible my friend can have so far indebted me!——This is a favour I can never return.

Ramb. You over-rate it, upon my soul you do; I am sufficiently repaid by this embrace.

Const. I can never repay thee.—Would'st thou have given me worlds, it could not have equalled the least favour conferr'd on this lady.

Ramb. I should have conferr'd some favours on her indeed, if she would have accepted them. [*Aside.*

Hil. I am glad it is to Mr. Constant's friend I am obliged.

Sot. Yes, you are damnably obliged to him for his character of you. [*Aside.*

Const. My dear Hilaret, shall I beg to hear it all? I can have no pleasure equal to finding new obligations to this gentleman.

Hil. Since you desire it——

Ramb. I fancy, Madam, your fright at that time may have occasioned your forgetting some circumstance; therefore, since Captain Constant desires it, I will tell him the story.—I had just parted from this gentleman, when I heard a young lady's voice crying out for help; (I think the word Rape was mentioned, but that I cannot perfectly remember;) upon this, making directly to the place where the noise proceeded, I found this lady in the arms of a very rude fellow——

Hil. The most impudent fellow, sure, that ever was born!

Ramb. A very impudent fellow, and yet a very cowardly one; for the moment I came up he quitted his hold, and was gone out of sight in the twinkling of an eye.

Const. My dear Ramble, what hast thou done for me!

Ramb. No obligation, dear Constant! I would have done the same for any man breathing. But to proceed: The watch came up, who would not be satisfied with what she then said, but conveyed us both to the Round-House, whence we were carried in the morning before justice Squeezum, and by him, notwithstanding this lady's protestations, your humble servant was committed to that place where he now finds himself with this good company.

Const. Oh, my friend!—May heaven send me an opportunity of serving thee in the same manner!

Ramb. May that be the only prayer which it denies to Constant.

SCENE X.

CONSTANT, RAMBLE, SOTMORE, HILARET, STAFF.

Staff. The punch is ready, gentlemen, you may walk down; the liberty of my house is at your service.

Sot. And that is liberty enough, while thou hast punch here. If thy house were a sea of punch, I would not prefer any house in town to it.

Staff. Your honour shall not want that.

Sot. And I shall want nothing more.

Staff. Captain, a word with you. [*To* Ramble.] There's Madam Squeezum below desires to speak with you alone.

Ramb. Bring her up.—Sotmore, you must excuse me a few moments, Constant and this lady will entertain you.

Sot. Let the moments be very few. I'll lay five gallons to one, this fellow hath another whore in his eye.

SCENE XI.

RAMBLE, MRS. SQUEEZUM.

Ramb. So; my affair with my friend's mistress is happily over.——That I should not know a modest woman! But there is so great an affectation of modesty in some women of the town, and so great an affectation of impudence in some women of fashion, that it is not impossible to mistake. Now for Mrs. Justice, her business with me is not exceeding difficult to guess.

Mrs. Squeez. You will think I have a vast deal of charity, captain, who am not only the solicitress of your liberty at home to my husband, but can carry my goodnature so far as to visit you in your confinement. I cannot say but I have a generous pity for any one whom I imagine to be accused wrongfully.

Ramb. I am obliged to you indeed, Madam, for that supposal.

Mrs. Squeez. You are the cause of it. Wherefore do you imagine I ventured myself alone with you this morning?

Ramb. From your great humanity, Madam.

Mrs. Squeez. Alas, Sir! it was to try whether you were really the man you were reported to be; and I am certain I found you as inoffensive, quiet, civil, well-bred a gentleman, as any virtuous woman could have wished. Your behaviour was so modest that I could never imagine it possible you should have been guilty of a rape. No overgrown alderman of sixty, or taper beau of six and twenty, could have been more innocent company.

Ramb. Whu !—— [*Aside.*

Mrs. Squeez. Your then carriage hath wrought so great an effect upon me, that I have ventured to trust myself here with you; nay, I could trust myself any where with so modest a gentleman.

Ramb. I'll take care, Madam, never to forfeit your good opinion of me; you may trust yourself with me any where; I'll never behave in any other manner than becomes the best bred man alive with the best bred lady. I swear by this soft hand, these lips, and all the millions of charms that dwell in this dear body.

Mrs. Squeez. What do you mean?

Ramb. I know not what I mean; tongue can't express nor thought conceive—we can only feel the exquisite pleasures love has in store.

Mrs. Squeez. Nay, I protest and vow.

Ramb. Protestations are as vain as struggling. This closet hath a bed in it that would not disgrace a palace.

Sot. [*At the door.*] Why, Ramble! Jack Ramble! art thou not ashamed to leave thy friends thus for some little dirty strumpet? If thou dost not come immediately, we'll break open the door, and drown her in punch.

Mrs. Squeez. [*Softly.*] I am undone!——

Ramb. Fear nothing.——Go to your bowl, I'll come this instant.

Sot. I'll not wag without you.

Ramb. Then I'll come down, break your bowl, and spill all your liquor.

Sot. Bring thy whore along with thee! there's one there already, she'll be glad of her company: if you don't come in an instant, I will be back again.

Mrs. Squeez. What shall I do?

Ramb. My angel! love shall instruct thee.

Mrs. Squeez. Let me go—some other time—I will not run any venture here.

Ramb. I will not part with you.

Mrs. Squeez. You shall hear from me in half an hour. You shall have your liberty, and I'll appoint you where to meet me.

Ramb. Shall I depend on you?

Mrs. Squeez. You may——Adieu.——Don't follow me: I can slip out a back way.

Ramb. Farewell, my angel!

SCENE XII.

RAMBLE, *solus.*

Confound this drunken rascal! this is not the first time he hath spoiled an intrigue for me. But hold, as I am to have my liberty before-hand, I don't think this half-hour's delay at all unlucky. That consideration may sufficiently compensate the staying of my stomach. This adventure of mine begins to put on a tolerable aspect. An intrigue with a rich justice's wife, is not to be slighted by a young fellow of desperate fortune. I do not doubt but in a very short time, when I am taken up for the next rape, to bribe the justice with his own money.—Lend a man your gold, he may forget the debt; venture your life for him, he may forget the obligation: but once engage his wife, and you secure his friendship. There is

no friend in all extremity so sure as your cuckold—and the surest hold you can take of a man, as of a bull, is by his horns.

SCENE XIII.

RAMBLE, CONSTANT, SOTMORE, HILARET.

Sot. Ha! what's become of thy wench? If thou hadst none, thy absence was the more inexcusable.

Const. O Ramble! this our better genius hath invented the most notable plot!——Such a net is laid for the justice! it will at once entangle him, and disentangle us. Mr. Hogshead here is to play his part too.

Ramb. I am sorry we cannot do without him; for, should there be any claret in the way, he'd disappoint the whole affair for one bottle.

Sot. Not for the best Burgundy in France. This lady hath won my heart by one bumper.——By all the pleasures of drinking, Madam, I like you more than your whole sex put together. There is no honesty in man or woman that will not drink. Honesty is tried in wine, as gold is in the fire. Madam, you have made a conquest of me. I'll drink your health as long as I can stand, and that's as long as a reasonable woman can require.

Hil. I am exceedingly proud of my conquest over a man of Mr. Sotmore's good sense.

Const. Upon my word you may, you are the first woman I believe he ever was civil to.

Sot. It was because they none of them had your merit: a parcel of tea-drinking sluts.——If I had a daughter that drank tea, I would turn her out of doors. The reason that men are honester than women is, their liquors are stronger. If the sex were bred up to

brandy and tobacco, if they all liked drinking as well as you seem to do, Madam, I should turn a lover.

Ramb. Why, Constant, such another compliment would make thee jealous.

Hil. Upon my word he hath reason already!

Sot. Madam, I like you; and if a bottle of Burgundy were on one side, and you on the other, I do not know which I should choose.

Const. Thou would'st choose the bottle I am sure.

Ramb. But I long to hear this conspiracy.

Sot. Then it must be below. I strictly forbid any secrets to be told but at the council table. The rose is ever understood over the drinking room, and a glass is the surest turnkey to the lips.

Const. That's contrary to the opinion of philosophers.

Sot. Of the sober ones it may; but all your wise philosophers were a set of the most drunken dogs alive. I never knew a sober fellow but was an ass——and your ass is the soberest of all animals. Your sober philosophers and their works have been buried long ago. I remember a saying of that great philosopher and poet, Horace, who wrote in Falernian instead of ink:

> No verses last——can long escape the night,
> Which the dull scribbling water-drinkers write.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV. SCENE I.

SCENE, SQUEEZUM'S.

SQUEEZUM, QUILL.

SQUEEZUM.

You delivered my letter?

Quill. Yes, an't please your worship, I left it at the coffee-house, where she directed me.

Squeez. Very well.——Quill.

Quill. Sir.

Squeez. I think I may trust thee with any secret—and what I am now going to tell will shew thee what a confidence I put in thee.——In short, Quill, I suspect my wife—

Quill. Of what, Sir?

Squeez. I am afraid that I am not the only person free with her, and that I am free of the corporation of cuckolds.

Quill. Then your worship is free of all the corporations in England.

Squeez. Now thou knowest that there are very wholesome laws against cuckoldom; the advantage of a man's horns is, that he may shove his wife out of doors with them.

Quill. And that is no inconsiderable advantage.

Squeez. But there must be a discovery first. It is not enough that a man knows himself to be a cuckold; the world must know it too. He that will keep his horns in his pocket must keep his wife in his bosom. Therefore, Quill, as it is in your power to observe my wife, I assure you a very handsome reward on her conviction: for I

begin to find, that if I do not discover her, she will shortly discover me, or ruin me by bribing her to hold her tongue. It is not a little gold will make a gag for a woman.

Quill. Sir, I shall be as diligent as possible.

Squeez. And I am as liberal on your success.

[*Exit* Squeezum.

SCENE II.

QUILL *solus.*

Indeed justice, that bait will not do. I know you too well to trust to your liberality. Your wife will reward services better than you. Besides, I have too much honour to take fees on both sides.—And since I am her pimp in ordinary, I'll go like an honest and dutiful servant, and discover this conspiracy: for should she once be turn'd out of the family, I should make but a slender market of this close-finger'd justice, whose covetousness would suffer no rogues to live but himself.

SCENE III.

SCENE, *the* CONSTABLE'S *House.*

RAMBLE, CONSTANT.

Ramb. This little mistress of yours is the most dextrous politician, if that drunken poppy doth not disappoint us.

Const. Never fear him: he hath cunning enough; and there hath been so long a war in his head between wine and his senses that they seem now to have come to an agreement that he is never to be quite in them,

nor ever quite out of them: his life is one continued scene of being half drunk.

Ramb. Well, as we can be of no farther use in the affair, but must stay here and expect the issue; pr'ythee, tell me what hath become of you these three long years since you quitted the service of the East-India Company, and came over to England with Sotmore?

Const. Why, at my first return to England, the prospect of war was in every one's eye; and not only the reports of the people, but the augmentation of the troops assur'd us of its approach: upon which, I resolv'd to embark my small remains of fortune in the service of my country, and obtained the same commission on that occasion which I had enjoyed in the Indies. My history is not very full of adventures: I continued therein till the reduction, when I shared the fate of several unhappy brave fellows, and was sent a begging with a red coat on my back.

Ramb. It is the faculty of the cloth to be ragged. ——Red is as apt to be ragged, as white to be soil'd. It is commonly the fate of our brave soldiers to bring home ragged cloaths, as well as colours, and both are rewarded by Westminster-hall——the one is hung up in it, and the other is locked up safe by an order from it; for, Heaven be prais'd! the gaols are always open hospitals for us.

Const. The only happiness which hath attended me since my return is my having contracted an intimacy with that young lady whom you saw here; which hath proceeded so far, that last night we had appointed to meet in order to our marriage: but, as I was just arrived at the place, a woman well-dress'd was attacked in the street by a ruffian. I immediately flying to her assistance, the fellow quitted her, and left me alone in the possession of the watch, who early this morning carried

me before Justice Squeezum, and by him I was committed hither.

Ramb. What, did she appear against you?

Const. No; they said she was ill of some bruises she had received, but desired I might be kept in custody till the afternoon, at which time she would appear against me. But by what Hilaret hath told us, and by some methods which have been used to extort money from me, I am inclined to fancy it all a contrived piece of villainy of the justice, and not of the woman's, as I at first imagined.

Ramb. Be assur'd of it;——if there be roguery, the justice hath the chief part in it. But comfort yourself with the expectation of revenge; for I think he cannot possibly escape the net we have spread, unless the devil hath more gratitude than he is reported to have, and will assist his very good friend at a crisis.

Const. But what do you intend in England, where you have no friends.

Ramb. I know not yet whether I have or no. I left an old father here, and a rich one. He thought fit to turn me out of doors for some frolics, which it is probable, if he yet lives, he may have forgiven me by this. But what's become of him I know not; for I have not heard one word of him these ten years.

Const. I think you have been vastly careless in neglecting him so long.

Ramb. 'Tis as I have acted in all affairs of life; my thoughts have ever succeeded my actions: the consequence hath caused me to reflect when it was too late. I never reasoned on what I should do, but what I had done; as if my reason had her eyes behind, and could only see backwards.

SCENE IV.

RAMBLE, CONSTANT, STAFF.

Staff. Here's a letter for your honour.

Ramb. [*Reads it.*] Ay, this is a letter, indeed!

Const. What is it?

Ramb. My freedom, under a sign-manual from the queen of these regions.

Const. Explain.

Ramb. Then, Sir, in plain English, without either trope or figure, it is a letter from the justice's wife, with an order to the constable for my liberty. [*Reads.*

'SIR,

'I was no sooner recovered of the fright which that 'unmannerly friend of yours occasioned, than I have 'performed my promise. You will find me at home: 'the constable hath orders by the bearer to acquit you.' Here's good nature for you! [*Kisses the letter.*] Thou dear wife of a damn'd rogue of a justice, I fly to thy arms.

Const. Harkye! suppose you brought her to be a witness to our design—and—here, take this letter of assignation from the justice to Hilaret; it will give your discovery credit.

Ramb. An admirable thought! I fly to execute it. Dear Constant, good-morrow. I hope, when next we meet, we shall meet

In happier climes, and on a safer shore,
Where no vile justice shall invade us more.

Const. Success attend you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *A Tavern.*

SQUEEZUM, DRAWER.

Squeez. No woman been to inquire for Mr. Jones?

Draw. Sir, I know of none; but I'll ask at the bar, if you please.

Squeez. Do—and leave word, if any such comes, to shew her up hither.—I have no reason to doubt her company, but I am impatient for it. I protest this woman hath revived the vigour of youth in me; sure, I must have over-reckoned my years!——I cannot be above forty-nine at the most.—I wish this dear girl was come.—I am afraid I did wrong in giving her those five shillings, in a purse worth above two shillings more, which who knows she may be spending on some bully, who will perhaps send another present to me in return.

SCENE VI.

SQUEEZUM, HILARET.

Squeez. Oh! you are come—you little, pretty, dear, sweet rogue!——I have been waiting for you these——these four hours at least.

Hil. Young lovers are commonly earlier than their appointment.

Squeez. Give me a kiss for that.—Thou shalt find me a young lover, a vigorous young lover too.——Hit me a slap in the face, do——Bow-wow! Bow-wow! I'll eat up your clothes.——Come, what will you drink? White or red?——Women love white best.——Boy, bring half a pint of mountain.——Come, sit down; do, sit down.——Come, now let us hear the story how you were first

debauched.—Come—that I may put it down in my history at home. I have the history of all the women's ruin that ever I lay with, and I call it, THE HISTORY OF MY OWN TIMES.

Hil. I'll warrant it is as big as a church bible.

Squeez. It is really of a good reputable size. I have done execution in my time.

Hil. And may do execution still.

Boy. [*Without.*] Half a pint of mountain in the Lion, score.

Squeez. Well—But now let me have the history—Where did your amour begin?—at church, I warrant you. More amours begin at church than end there.—Or, perhaps, you went to see the man of war——Going to see sights hath ruined many a woman. No wonder children are lovers of them, since so many owe their being to them.

Hil. [*Aside.*] I thank you for that remembrance, I had forgot my lover.——Ay, Sir, it was there indeed I saw him first; that was the fatal scene of our interview.

Squeez. Well, and was the amour managed by letter, or by word of mouth?

Hil. By letter, Sir. I believe he writ two quires of paper to me before I would send him an answer: I returned him several unopened, and then several others opened—But at last he obtained an answer.

Squeez. Well, and after your answer, what followed then?

Hil. Oh! he thought himself sure of me as soon as I had answered his letter.

Squeez. Ay, I have always observed in my amours that when I received an answer I never failed of the woman; a woman follows her letter infallibly. Well, and what did he say in the second letter?

Hil. Oh! he swore a thousand fond things: that his

love should last as long as his life: that his whole happiness depended on me——and a vast deal of that nature.

Squeez. Ay, ay, just as I have done myself. I find whoring is as methodical as the law.

Hil. And I fancy as tedious with you, old gentleman. [*Aside.*

Squeez. Well, and how many letters did you write to him, ey!——before——

Hil. Not many. He did not want much encouragement.

Squeez. Then, passing over the rest of the suit, let us come to the last fatal meeting.

Hil. It was of a Sunday morning——

Squeez. Right. My old method: when other people are gone to church.

Hil. In an exceeding hot day.——

Squeez. May or June?——Women and cherries are commonly gathered in the same month.

Hil. I was fatigued with walking in the garden, and retired to an arbour to repose myself: guess what was my surprise when I found the dear perfidious had conveyed himself thither before me.

Squeez. A sly dog! My old way again. An ambush is as useful in love as war.

Hil. At my first entrance he pretended a surprise at seeing me unexpectedly; but on my questioning him how and with what design he had conveyed himself there, he immediately threw off the cloak and confessed all: he flew to me, caught me in his arms with the most eager raptures, and swore the most violent love and eternal constancy. I in the greatest agony of rage repelled him with my utmost force; he redoubled his attacks, I slackened my resistance; he intreated, I raved; he sighed, I cry'd; he press'd, I swooned; he——

Squeez. Oh!—I can bear no longer, my angel! my paradise! my honey-suckle! my dove! my darling!

Hil. What do you mean, Sir?

Squeez. I mean to eat you up, to swallow you down, to squeeze you to pieces.

Hil. Help there! a rape, a rape!

SCENE VII.

SQUEEZUM, HILARET, SOTMORE.

Sot. Hey-day! what in the devil's name is here?——Justice Squeezum ravishing a woman!

Hil. Oh! for Heaven's sake, Sir, assist a poor forlorn, hapless maid, whom this wicked man hath treacherously seduced.

Squeez. Oh lud!——Oh lud!

Sot. Fie upon you, Mr. Squeezum; you who are a magistrate, you who are the preserver and executor of our laws, thus to be the breaker of them!

Squeez. Can'st thou accuse me?

Hil. You know too well how barbarously you have used me. For pity's sake, Sir, secure him; do not let him escape, till we send for a constable. If there be any law for a justice, I am resolved to hang him.

Squeez. O lud; what shame have I brought myself to! that ever I should have lived to see this day!

Sot. If thou hadst stood to thy bottle like an honest fellow this had never happened; but you must go a whoring with a pox to you, at your years too; with these spindle shanks, that weezle face, that crane's neck of a body. Who would have imagined that such an old withered may-pole as thou art should attempt to fall on a woman? Why thou wilt be the diversion of the whole town.—Grub-street will dine a month on your account.

Thou wilt be ushered to Tyburn with more pomp than Alexander was ushered into Babylon. Justice never triumphs so universally as at the execution of one of her own officers.

Squeez. Sir, if there be truth on earth, I am as innocent.

Sot. All the innocence on earth will not save you—— A man doth not always draw the rope by the weight of his sins. Your innocence will not acquit you in a court of Justice against her oath; and, when you come to the gallows, it will be vain to plead your innocence. All's fish that comes to the net there. The gallows so seldom gets its due, that it never parts with what it gets.

Hil. Can you pretend to innocence? Was not this gentleman an eye-witness to your rudeness, to the injury you offered me?

Sot. Ay, ay, I can swear to the rape with as safe a conscience as I can drink a glass of wine.

Squeez. I see I am betrayed; I am caught in my own trap. There is but one way to escape, which is the way I have opened to others. [*Aside.*] I see, Madam, your design is to extort money from me. I am too well acquainted with the laws to contend: I hope you will be reasonable, for I am poor, very poor, I assure you; it is not for men of my honesty to be rich.

Hil. Sir, if you would give me millions, it should not satisfy my revenge! you should be hanged for an example to others.

Squeez. Here's a cruel wretch! who prefers my blood to my gold, which is almost my blood.

Sot. Hey-day! what vehicle is this? a vinegar bottle? ——Half a pint, by Jupiter! Why, thou sneaking rascal, canst thou pretend to honesty, when this dram glass hath been found upon thee? Were I thy judge, or thy jury, this very sneaking vehicle should hang thee, without any other evidence. But come, since you are to be hang'd,

I'll drink one bumper to your good journey to the other world.—You will find abundance of your acquaintance, whom you have sent before you.—And now, I'll go call the drawer to fetch a constable.

Squeez. Hold, hold, Sir; for mercy sake do not expose me so.—Will nothing content you, Madam?

Hil. Nothing but the rigour of the law. Sir, I beseech you lose no time, but send for the constable immediately.

Squeez. I'll do any thing; I'll consent to any terms.

Hil. The constable! the constable!

Squeez. Stay, dear Sir; I'll give you a hundred guineas; I'll do any thing.

Hil. Remember your vile commitment of two gentlemen this morning.—But I will revenge the injuries of my friends.—Sir, I beseech you send for the officers.

Squeez. One is already dismissed from his confinement, the other shall be dismissed immediately.

Hil. It is too late.

Sot. Harkye, Sir, will you leave off whoring, and take to drinking for the future.

Squeez. I'll leave them off both.

Sot. Then you shall be hang'd: but if you will com mence honest fellow, and get drunk every day of your life, I'll intercede with this lady, that, on your acquitting the gentleman, you shall be acquitted yourself.

Squeez. I'll do any thing, I'll quit any thing.

Sot. Madam, let me persuade you to be merciful this time to this unfortunate and undutiful servant of justice.

Hil. Sir, I can deny you nothing.

Squeez. Get me a pen and ink; I'll send an order to bring him hither, and discharge him instantly.

Sot. Drawer, bring pen, ink, and paper, and a bottle of old port.

Squeez. [*to* Hil.] And could you have had the conscience to have sworn against a poor old man?

Sot. Faith! 'twas a little cruel. Could you have had the heart to see him swinging like a gibbeted skeleton? Could you have served up such a dry dish to justice—— The body of one of her own children too?——But here's the paper.——Come, Sir, write his discharge and your own.

[Squeezum *writes*, Sotmore *and* Hilaret *advance.*]

Sot. You have managed this matter so well, that I shall have an opinion of your sex's understanding ever after.

Hil. Let a woman alone for a plot, Mr. Sotmore.

Sot. Ay, Madam, a woman that will drink a bumper. Wine is the fountain of thought: and

The more we drink,
The more we think.

It is a question with me, whether wine hath done more good, or physic harm in the world: I wou'd have every apothecary's shop in the town turn'd into a tavern.

Hil. I am afraid, the more you have of the one, the more you will require of the other.

Sot. It is their drugs that debauch our wine: Wine in itself is as innocent as water, and physic poisons both. It is not the juice of the grape, but of the drug, that is pernicious. Let me advise you, Madam, leave off your damn'd adulterated water, your tea, and take to wine. It will paint your face better than vermilion, and put more honesty in your heart than all the sermons you can read. I'll introduce you to some clubs of my acquaintance, a set of honest fellows, that live in the clouds of tobacco, and know no home but a tavern.

Squeez. This letter, Sir, will produce the gentleman immediately.

Sot. Here, drawer——let this letter be sent whither it is directed. Come, honest justice, our acquaintance

hath an odd beginning, but we may be very good companions soon. Let us sit down, and expect our friend in the manner it becometh us. Remember what you have bargained to do every day of your life, and the obligation shall be dated from this hour. Come, sit thee down, honest publican, old justice merchant. [*They sit.*] Here's a health to the propagation of trade, thy trade I mean, to the increase of whores, and false dice.—Thou art a collector of the customs of sin, and he that would sin with impunity must have thy permit. Come, pledge me, old boy; if thou leavest one drop in the glass thou shall go to gaol yet, by this bottle.

Squeez. I protest, Sir, your hand is too bountiful; you will overcome me with wine.

Sot. Well, and I love to see a magistrate drunk; it is a comely sight. When justice is drunk, she cannot take a bribe.

Squeez. Do you not remember how the Athenians punished drunkenness in a magistrate?

Sot. And do not I know that we have no such Athenian law among us? We punish drunkenness, as well as other sins, only in the lower sort. Drink, like the game, was intended for gentlemen—and no one should get drunk who cannot go home in a coach—Come, Madam, it is your glass now.

Hil. Dear Sir! I beg you would not compel me to it.

Sot. By this bottle but I will; I'll ravish thee to it before the justice's face. Come, it will be better for you than tea; you will not be obliged to sculk away and take a dram after this. Come, drink the justice's health, as a token of amity; the justice is a good honest drunken fellow. But let me give you some wholesome advice. [*To the Justice.*] Leave off fornicating; leave the girls to the boys, and stand to thy bottle; it is a virtue

becoming our years; and don't be too hard on a wild honest young rake. Thou hast committed a couple of the prettiest boys to-day; don't do so any more.—Be as severe as you please to whores and gamesters, that offer to act without your licence: but if ever you grant a warrant for a friend of mine again, you shall not only drink the wine, but eat the bottle too. Come, here's your health, in hopes of your amendment; thou shalt pledge thy own health, in a bumper.—Here, boy, bring up a gallon of wine.

Squeez. Not a drop more.

Sot. A drop! confound the name. Come, empty your glass; the lady is a-dry.

Squeez. This is worse than a prison.

Sot. You will get out of this with paying less fees. Drink, I say.

Squeez. Well—since I must.

Sot. Come, we'll have a song in praise of drinking.—I'll sing the stanzas, and you shall bear the chorus.

SONG.

Let a set of sober asses
Rail against the joys of drinking,
    While water, tea,
    And milk agree,
To set cold brains a thinking.
    Power and wealth,
    Beauty, health,
Wit and mirth in wine are crown'd
    Joys abound,
    Pleasure's found,
Only where the glass goes round.

II.

The ancient sects on happiness
All differ'd in opinion,
But wiser rules
Of modern schools,
In wine fix her dominion.
Power and wealth, &c.

III.

Wine gives the lover vigour,
It maketh glow the cheeks of beauty,
Makes poets write,
And soldiers fight,
And friendship do its duty.
Power and wealth, &c.

IV.

Wine was the only Helicon,
Whence poets are long-liv'd so;
'Twas no other main
Than brisk Champaigne,
Whence Venus was deriv'd too.
Power and wealth, &c.

V.

When Heav'n in Pandora's box
All kind of ill had sent us,
In a merry mood,
A bottle of good
Was cork'd up to content us.
Power and wealth, &c.

VI.

All virtues wine is nurse to,
Of ev'ry vice destroyer;
Gives dullards wit,
Makes just the cit,
Truth forces from the lawyer.
Power and wealth, &c.

VII.

Wine sets our joys a flowing,
Our care and sorrow drowning,
Who rails at the bowl,
Is a Turk in his soul,
And a Christian ne'er should own him.
Power and wealth, &c.

SCENE VIII.

SQUEEZUM, HILARET, SOTMORE, CONSTANT, STAFF.

Const. My Hilaret! my dear!

Hil. My Constant!

Sot. Give you joy, dear Constant, of your liberty.

Const. Thank you, dear Sotmore, to you I am partly obliged for it: Ramble and I will make you amends: we'll give you six nights for this.

Sot. Where is he?

Const. Very safe; be not concerned about him.

Hil. Well, Sir, since our affair is ended, there is the purse you presented me this morning. As I have not performed your expectations one way I'll give you what I believe you did not expect—your money again. It is unopen'd, I assure you.

Squeez. Thou art welcome, however.

Sot. Come, gentlemen, be pleased to take every man his chair and his glass; we will dedicate one hour or two to drinking, I am resolv'd.

Squeez. First we will sacrifice to justice. Mr. Constable, do your duty.

Staff. Come in there.

SCENE IX.

SQUEEZUM, HILARET, SOTMORE, CONSTANT, STAFF, ASSISTANTS.

The Assistants *seize* Constant, Hilaret, *and* Sotmore.

Squeez. Seize those people in the king's name—I accuse that woman and that man of conspiring to swear a rape against me.

Staff. It is in vain to contend, gentlemen.

Hil. Oh, the villain!

Squeez. [*to* Sot.] The next letter you extort, Sir, be sure to examine the contents.

Sot. Thou rascal! will not even wine make thee honest?

Squeez. Observe, gentlemen, how abusive he is; but I'll make an example of you all: I'll prosecute you to the utmost severity of the law.—Mr. Constable, convey the prisoners to your house, whence you shall have orders to bring them before a justice.

Sot. And art thou really in earnest?

Squeez. You shall find I am, Sir, to your cost.

Sot. Then I have found one man with whom I would not drink a glass of wine.

Staff. Come, gentlemen, you know the way to my house.—I am particularly glad to see your honour [*to*

Sotmore], and will accommodate you in the best manner I can.

Const. I am too well acquainted with misfortune to repine at any; but how shall I bear yours, my Hilaret?

Hil. The less you seem to bear, the more you will lighten mine.

Sot. I must give the justice one wish. May Heaven rain small-beer upon thee, and may it corrupt thy body, till it is as putrefied as thy mind.

Hil. One blessing only may Heav'n leave thy life,
May it take all things from thee—but thy wife.

ACT V. SCENE I.

SCENE, POLITIC'S *House.*

POLITIC *solus.*

SURE, never child inherited less of a father's disposition than mine; her mother certainly played me foul in the begetting her: I, who have been my whole life noted for sobriety, could never have given being to so wild a creature. I begin to recollect having seen a tall half-pay officer at my house formerly: nor do I think the girl unlike him. I am sure she hath ever been wild enough to have had any officer in the kingdom for her father. Nature hath been kind to the male of all creatures but man: the bull, the horse, the dog, are not encumber'd even with their own offspring: that care falls only to the females: but man, when once a gabbling priest hath chatter'd a few mischievous words over him, is bound to have and to hold from that day forward all the brats his wife is pleased to bestow on him. Yet I must own the

girl hath been ever dutiful to me, till she became acquainted with this cursed fellow in a red coat. Why should red have such charms in the eyes of a woman? The Roman senate kept their armies abroad to prevent their sharing in their lands at home: we should do the same to prevent their sharing in our wives. A tall lusty fellow shall make more work for a midwife in one winter at home, than he can for a surgeon in ten summers abroad.

SCENE II.

POLITIC, FAITHFUL.

Pol. Well, any news of my daughter yet?

Faith. No, Sir; but there is some news from the secretaries' office; a mail is arrived from Holland, and you will have the contents of it in one of the evening papers.

Pol. Very well! I must be patient. I think we have three mails together now; I am not satisfied at all with the affairs in the North: the northern winds have not blown us any good lately; the clouds are a little darker in the East too than I could wish them.

SCENE III.

POLITIC, DABBLE.

Pol. Mr. Dabble, good morrow.

Dab. Are the mails come in?

Pol. Just arrived.

Dab. I have not slept one wink for reflecting on what you told me last night; perhaps this Dutch mail may

give some insight into those affairs. But what says the Lying Post?

Pol. I have had no time to read it yet, I wish you would. I have only read the London Journal, the Country Journal, the Weekly Journal, Applebee's Journal, the British Journal, the British Gazetteer, the Morning-Post, the Coffee-house Morning Post, the Daily Post, the Daily Post-Boy, the Daily Journal, the Daily Courant, the Gazette, the Evening Post, the Whitehall Evening Post, the London Evening Post, and the St. James's Evening Post. So, if you please, begin the Lying Post.

Dab. [*reads.*] 'Moscow, January the 5th. We learn 'from Constantinople, that affairs continue still in the 'same doubtful way: it is not yet known what course 'our court will take. The Empress having been slightly 'indisposed, the other day, took the air in her own 'coach, and returned so well recovered, that she eat 'a very hearty supper.'—

Pol. Hum!—There is no mention of the supper in any other papers.

Dab. 'Berlin, January the 20th. We hear daily mur-'murs here concerning certain measures taken by a 'certain northern potentate; but cannot certainly learn 'either who that potentate is, or what are the measures 'which he hath taken—meantime we are well assured 'that time will bring them all to light.'

Pol. Pray read that last over again.

Dab. 'Meantime, we are well assured, that time will 'bring them all to light.'

Pol. Hum! hum!

Dab. 'Marseilles, January the 18th. The affairs in 'regard to Italy continue still in the same uncertain 'condition.'

Pol. Hum!

Dab. 'The talk of a large embarkation still runs high.'

Pol. Hum!

Dab. 'The Spaniards continue still encamped near Barcelona.'

Pol. Hum! [*Shakes his head.*

Dab. 'And every thing seems tending to a rupture—'mean time we expect the return of a courier from 'Vienna, who, 'tis generally expected, will bring the 'news of a general pacification.'

Pol. All is well again!

Dab. I like this, and some other papers, who disappoint you with good news. Where the beginning of a paragraph threatens you with war, and the latter part of it ensures you peace.

Pol. Please to read on——

Dab. 'However, notwithstanding these assurances, 'tis 'doubted by most people, whether the said courier will 'not rather bring a confirmation of the war; but this is 'all guess work, and, till such time as we see an actual 'hostility committed, we must leave our readers in the 'same uncertain state we found them.'

Pol. Hum! there is no certainty to be come at, I find; it may be either peace or war.

Dab. Tho' were I to lay a wager, I should chuse war; for, if you observe, we are twice assured of that, whereas we have only one affirmation on the side of peace—but stay, perhaps the next paragraph, which is dated from Fontainbleau, may decide the question. 'Fontainbleau, 'January 23. Yesterday his Majesty went a hunting, 'to-day he hears an opera, and to-morrow he hears 'mass.'

Pol. I don't like that; hearing mass is seldom the forerunner of good news.

Dab. 'It is observable that Cardinal Fleury——'

Pol. Ay, now for it.

Dab. 'It is observable that Cardinal Fleury hath, for 'several days last past, been in close conference with the 'minister of a certain state, which causes various specu-'lations; but as we do not know what was the matter in 'debate, we cannot say what may be the consequence 'thereof. Meantime we cannot help observing that it 'hath occasioned some people to put on very serene 'looks, who had worn cloudy ones for some time before: 'some imagine, on comparing this with the news from 'Marseilles, that a war will be unavoidable——others, 'who are more peaceably inclined, are as strenuous 'advocates on the other side.——We must refer the 'whole to the determination of time, that great judge in 'worldly affairs, who never fails with his two-edged 'scythe to mow down the weeds which shadow over the 'secret counsels of state, and lay them open to the naked 'eye of the discerning politician.'

Pol. Shall I beg to hear that over again?

SCENE IV.

POLITIC, DABBLE, FAITHFUL.

Dab. [*reads.*] 'We must refer the whole to the deter-'mination,' &c. [Dab. *continues reading.*

Faith. Oh, Sir, Cloris hath brought the strangest news of my young mistress.

Pol. Don't interrupt us——blockhead.

Faith. If you lose a moment, she may be lost for ever.

Pol. Sirrah! peace.

Faith. Sir, my young mistress, Miss Hilaret, will be undone, ruined, hanged, if you do not assist her; she's taken up for a rape.—Oh! my poor young lady! the sweetest, best-temper'd lady sure that ever was born. Oh! that ever I should see the day! And can you sit

here, Sir, reading a parcel of damn'd, confounded, lying nonsense, and not go to your daughter's assistance?

Pol. Sure the fellow is possessed.

Faith. Sir, your daughter is possessed—possessed by constables—she is taken up for a rape.

Pol. My daughter taken up for a rape!

Faith. Yes, Sir; for ravishing a justice of peace.

Pol. Sure some accident has touched the fellow's brain.

Faith. Ay, Sir, and it would touch yours too, if you had a grain of humanity in you—Oh! that I should live to see my poor young lady in such a misfortune!

Pol. A woman taken up for a rape — - it is impossible.

Faith. They may swear it though for all that—I know her to be as modest a good young lady as any in the kingdom; but what will not a set of rogues swear. Sir, I liv'd with Squeezum before I liv'd with you; and know him to be as great a villain as any in the kingdom. Do, good Sir, come but with me to justice Worthy's, if you do not find your daughter there, turn me away for a vagabond.

Dab. I do remember, neighbour Politic, to have seen in some newspaper a story not very different from this.

Pol. Nay, if you have seen it in a newspaper, it may probably have some truth in it; so, neighbour Dabble, you will excuse me; I will meet you within an hour at the coffee-house, and there we will confer farther.

SCENE V.

SCENE, WORTHY'S *House.*

WORTHY, ISABELLA.

Wor. Sure modesty is quite banished from the age we

live in. There was a time when virtue carried something of a divine awe with it, which no one durst attack; but now the insolence of our youth is such, no woman dare walk the streets, but those who do it for bread.

Isa. And yet our laws, brother Worthy, are as rigorous as those of other countries, and as well executed.

Wor. That I wish they were; but golden sands too often clog the wheels of justice, and obstruct her course: the very riches, which were the greatest evidence of his villainy, have too often declared the guilty innocent; and gold hath been found to cut a halter surer than the sharpest steel.

Isa. Well, I am resolved to take care how I venture a step again after it is dark: I find the sun is the only guard to us women; for, however chaste the moon may be in herself, she takes but very little care of ours.

Wor. But could the villain be very rude?

Isa. As rude as so short a time would permit. I would have given all I was worth in the world to have been here; but since I escaped, let us forget it.

Wor. Forget! by Heaven it shocks me; that we, who boast as wholesome laws as any kingdom upon earth, should, by the roguery of some of their executors, lose all their benefit. I long to see the time when here, as in Holland, the traveller may walk unmolested, and carry his riches openly with him.

SCENE VI.

WORTHY, ISABELLA, SQUEEZUM.

Squeez. Mr. Worthy, your humble servant. I come to wait on you on the strangest piece of business. We are brought to a fine pass indeed, when magistrates shall not

be safe; we are like to protect others when we cannot protect ourselves.

Wor. What is the occasion of all this passion, Mr. Squeezum?

Squeez. Occasion! I have scarce power to tell you. I have discovered one of the most damnable conspiracies that hath been invented since the gunpowder treason plot.

Wor. Nothing against the government, I hope?

Squeez. Marry, but it is; for that, which is against the officers of the government, is against the government. In short, Sir, it is a conspiracy against me, against myself. What do you think, brother Worthy, but that, moved and seduced by the instigation of the devil, a vile woman hath conspired to swear a rape against me?

Wor. A rape against you! foolish jade! Why, your very face would acquit you——you have innocence in your looks, brother Squeezum.

Squeez. I hope my character will acquit me against such an accusation.

Wor. I think it ought; a man, whose character would not, is very unfit for that honourable commission you bear.

Squeez. True! these slurs reflect on us all. The accusing a member is accusing the body. We should consider it may be our own case. We should stand by one another, as the lawyers do. I hope, brother, you will shew me extraordinary justice; and I assure you, should any affair of yours come before me, my partiality shall lean on your side.

Wor. Partiality, Sir! I hope no cause of mine ever will require it. I assure you I shall do the strictest justice; I believe you will not need more.

Squeez. Sir, my case needs no more; but I think it incumbent on us all to discountenance any prosecution of ourselves on any account whatsoever.

Wor. To discountenance it by the innocence of our lives is indeed laudable, but no farther. It is a cursed law which exempts the maker, or the executor of it from its penalty.

Squeez. Truly, brother Worthy, I think the makers of laws, and the executors of them, should be free of them; as authors and actors are free of the playhouse.

Wor. You are ludicrous, Mr. Squeezum. But let me tell you he is the greatest of villains, who hath the impudence to hold the sword of justice while he deserves its edge.

Squeez. And let me tell you, brother Worthy, he is the greatest of fools who holds the sword of justice and hurts himself with it.

Isa. Brother, your servant; my presence will be very little necessary at this trial.

SCENE VII.

WORTHY, SQUEEZUM, CONSTANT, HILARET, STAFF, SOTMORE, BRAZENCOURT, FIREBALL, *three* ASSISTANTS.

Squeez. But here come the prisoners. — Brother Worthy, this is the woman whom I accuse of this detestable fact;—the manner of it was this: I received a letter in an unknown hand, appointing me to meet at a tavern, which out of pure good-nature I complied with; and upon my arrival found that woman there alone, who, after a short discourse, laid hold of me, and bawl'd out; on which that man there entered, and both threaten'd me, that unless I immediately discharged that man [*points to* Const.] with another whom I had committed for notorious crimes, that the woman should swear a rape against me.—This I am ready to swear.

1.
2. *Ass.* } And we are ready to swear.
3.

Wor. What do you say, young woman, to this? You do not look like one whom I should suspect of such behaviour.

Hil. That I did threaten him, as he says, indeed I confess.

Wor. But did he attempt any such thing?

Hil. I can't say he did, but———

Squeez. Do you hear this, brother Worthy? I think you have nothing to do but to make her Mittimus.

Wor. And for what reason did you offer this?

Hil. I offer'd it only to frighten him to the discharge of two gentlemen, whom he had villainously committed to the custody of that constable.

Wor. For what crimes do they stand committed, Mr. Constable?

Staff. For two rapes, an't please your worship.

Hil. One of them on my account,—though I never swore the least thing against him.

Wor. On your account,—I begin to be afraid he was unjustly committed indeed.

Squeez. Now, Sir, we shall proceed to blacken a little the character of this woman. Call Mr. Brazencourt; Mr. Brazencourt, what do you know of this fine lady?

Brazen. I know nothing more of her than that I kept her half a year.

Wor. Kept her——in what capacity did you keep her?

Brazen. In the capacity of a whore, till I was obliged to turn her off for stealing four of my shirts, two pair of stockings, and my Common Prayer Book.

Squeez. Call Captain Fireball.

Wor. Captain Fireball, pray do you know any harm of that person there?

Fire. Harm of her! ay, and so doth my surgeon too. She came to me from Major Brazencourt. I kept her two months.

Hil. Sir, I beseech you to hear me.

Wor. By and by. You must not interrupt them.—Go on. Did you lose anything by her too?

Fire. No, but I got something by her, which made my surgeon get something by me—I love to express myself in modest terms, but I believe you all know what I mean.

Squeez. Call Mr. Drury. We shall blacken her farther presently.

Wor. Indeed, you need not; let us hear no more; for her sake, I will never put confidence in an innocent countenance again.—Well, woman, can you say anything for yourself?

Hil. Oh! that I could hide myself for ever from the world, and never from this hour behold the sun again!

Wor. Indeed, but you shall, Madam, and be beheld by others too.

Const. Come to my bosom, thou dearest, sweetest, loveliest; hide thy sorrows there.—Death only shall tear thee from my arms again. Death! hell itself cannot have a torment equal to seeing one tear of thine.

Sot. Harkye, justice, I believe thou art honester than thy brother; I am sure thou canst not be a greater rogue: if thou wilt act the right part, acquit us, and send that villain to prison.

SCENE VIII.

WORTHY, SQUEEZUM, CONSTANT, HILARET, SOTMORE, STAFF, CONSTABLES, ASSISTANTS, POLITIC, FAITHFUL, CLORIS.

Faith. Now, Sir, will you believe your own eyes?—Is not that your own daughter?

Pol. It is, indeed.—Oh! my unfortunate child—

Wor. Mr. Politic, your humble servant—I will but commit this woman to gaol, and then I will be at your command.

Pol. Sir, you shall not be my humble servant, nor will I be yours; and if you commit my daughter to prison you are the worst of Turks.

Wor. Your daughter, Sir!

Pol. Yes, Sir, my daughter, Sir.

Hil. Oh! my father!

Pol. My poor child!——That ever I should live to see thee in such a misfortune!

Wor. Is it possible, Mr. Politic, that this young lady is your daughter?

Pol. Yes, Sir, it is as possible, as that the Turks may come into our part of Europe; and I wish this may not be as sure as that.

SCENE IX.

WORTHY, SQUEEZUM, CONSTANT, HILARET, STAFF, CONSTABLES, ASSISTANTS, POLITIC, FAITHFUL, SOTMORE, CLORIS, RAMBLE, MRS. SQUEEZUM, QUILL.

Mrs. Squeez. Where is this glory of the bench? this gallant justice, this terror and example of sin? Do you know this hand, Sir? Did you write this assignation? You are a noble gentleman truly, to make an appointment with a fine lady, and then bring her before a magistrate.

Squeez. O my malignant stars!

Wor. Mrs. Squeezum, what is the matter?

Mrs. Squeez. You, Mr. Worthy, I am sure will pity one who hath the misfortune to be married to a man, who is as much a scandal to the commission he bears,

as you are an honour to it; my conscience hath been too long burthened with conniving at his rogueries. He, Sir, he alone is guilty, and every one whom he hath accused is innocent.

Wor. I know not what to think!

Ramb. Sir, that fellow there, that butcher of justice, is the greatest villain that ever was born.—Being a little frolicsome last night with this lady, that constable seiz'd us. 'Tis to me she is indebted for all this trouble; though Mr. Constable may claim some share in not suffering us to depart at her desire.

Mrs. Squeez. And Mr. Justice may claim a little, who committed you to the constable's house without any evidence, or even accusation.

Ramb. That he might extort two hundred pounds, for which sum he offer'd to compromise the matter.

Squeez. Harkye, Madam, I shall be obliged to commit you to Bedlam.

Mrs. Squeez. No, Sir, I shall prevent you in that, as well as in your other designs; your plot with Mr. Quill, which the whole world shall know; you shall be divorced, Sir, though not the way you desire.

Squeez. Sir, I beseech you to hear no more.

Wor. That, Sir, I cannot grant.

Ramb. Sir, I desire that you would read that letter, which he sent to this young lady whom he hath accused.

Wor. [*Reads.*] 'My little honey-suckle, I will meet 'you within this half-hour at the Eagle. I hope, after 'what you have received from me to-day, you will not 'disappoint yours till then and ever after.'——Did you write this letter, Mr. Squeezum?

Squeez. No, Sir, as I am ready to swear.

Mrs. Squeez. Sir, I will swear it to be his hand—

Faith. And so will I—I lived with him a twelve-month, and therefore should know it.

Quill. And I carried it to the lady.

Sot. Come, come, justice, thou hast proof enough of her innocence. I will give you the word of a man of honour, which is more than the oaths of twenty such scoudrels as these, that she never intended more than to frighten him to the acquittal of Captain Constant here, whom he had unjustly committed.

Const. And offered to acquit for a sum of money.

Wor. Captain Constant? is your name Constant, Sir?

Const. At your service.

Wor. Desire my sister to walk hither—I am more obliged to you than you know.

Squeez. Come, Sir, this is only losing time——I want the Mittimus.

SCENE X.

WORTHY, SQUEEZUM, RAMBLE, CONSTANT, SOTMORE, HILARET, POLITIC, MRS. SQUEEZUM, QUILL, STAFF, FAITHFUL, &c., ISABELLA.

Wor. Sister, do you know this gentleman?

Isa. Captain Constant! It is happy for me that I do ——I thank you, Sir, for your generous rescue last night, which my fright at that time prevented my acknowledging.

Const. And was it you, Madam?

Ramb. My Isabella!

Isa. Ha!——it is, it is my Ramble——

Ramb. My touch deceives me not, it is my charming she, once more restored to my despairing hopes.

Isa. What lucky stars can have contrived this interview?

Ramb. Very lucky stars they appear now; but they had a confounded ugly aspect some time ago.

Isa. Surprising! Brother, let that fellow be secured.

He was the person from whose hands this gentleman delivered me. [*To* Fireball.

Quill. I hope your worship will forgive me; but I hir'd these two men, by my master's command, to be evidences for him.

Wor. Surprising villainy!——secure them instantly. And particularly that justice,——whom I shall no longer treat as a gentleman, but as his villainy hath merited.—Constable, I charge you with them all—and let them be kept below in the parlour, whither I will come immediately and sign their commitment.

Squeez. Sir, you shall wish you had dealt more favourably with me.

Wor. Sir, your threatenings will not terrify me.

Faith. Come, gentlemen, we'll be your safeguard.

Mrs. Squeez. I'll follow thee, like thy evil genius, till I have brought thee to that justice thou deservest.

SCENE *the last.*

WORTHY, RAMBLE, CONSTANT, SOTMORE, HILARET, ISABELLA, POLITIC.

Ramb. My dear Isabella, I am so overjoyed at this unexpected meeting, that I do not ask for the safety of our treasure. Since the sea has refunded Isabella, let it take the jewels.

Isa. The sea hath been even kinder than your wish, it hath returned you both.

Ramb. I should soon have forgotten that loss in having Isabella; yet, for her sake, the treasure is welcome too.

Wor. Mr. Politic, I am heartily concerned at this misfortune which hath befallen your daughter.

Ramb. Mr. Politic!—By Heaven's, his features are the same. Had you not a son, Sir, once?

Pol. Yes, Sir, I had; but I turn'd him out of doors, and believe he was hang'd long ago.

Ramb. Then I am his ghost, just arrived from the Indies. When you turn'd me out of doors I got admitted into the East-India Company's service; I changed my name in order to escape your discovery——and I hope you will now give us both your blessing.

Pol. And are you really that wild fellow my son?

Ramb. I am that very identical wild person, I assure you.

Pol. I don't know whether I'll give you my blessing or no, till I see how you are married.

Wor. Mr. Politic, I rejoice in the union of our families; this lady, your son's wife, is my sister—and if fourscore thousand pounds can make the match agreeable to you, it will be so.

Pol. Hath the wild rogue made his fortune at last! Well, son, I give you my blessing; and my dear daughter I give you joy, and I hope the boy will give it you, ay, and lasting and constant joy.—If he doth not make you a good husband, I'll not own him: if he doth not make you blessed, he shall have no blessing of mine.

Isa. Sir, I doubt him not.

Ramb. Well, father, I have nothing more to ask of you, but in favour of my friend Captain Constant, whose love I am certain will complete the happiness of my sister.

Wor. I think I have never been witness to such a complication of villainy. Sir, [*to* Constant] I assure you, and all of you, you shall have sufficient reparation for the injuries you have suffer'd. And, Sir, by the character which I have had from my sister of that gentleman, I do not think your daughter can be better disposed of, let the difference of fortune be what it please.

Ramb. Besides, though his estate be not equal now, it may become so; for no man hath a better insight into politics.

Pol. Nay, if his studies bend that way, no man indeed can tell to what his estates may come.——Had I known this sooner, my doors should never have been shut against him. Sir, I shall be glad to confabulate with you at my house—and, if you should set your heart on my daughter, I do not believe I shall do anything to break it.

Ramb. Nay, Sir, there is no hour like the present; this hour hath proved lucky to your family.—Give me leave to present your daughter to one, whom, if she deserves, I shall be proud of calling her sister.

Const. Ramble, you have crown'd my obligations with a gift far dearer than the earth could prove.

Hil. I only wish you may always think so, captain. And now, papa, I hope you will pardon this night's sally to both me and poor Cloris; we have been already sufficiently punished; and since the event is happy, imitate in this one thing the Turks, and consider it favourably, as it hath been prosperous.

Pol. The Turks! I wish you were better acquainted with them than in romances; I hope that gentleman will take care to instruct you in public affairs.——Well, Jack [*to* Ramble], I long to have some communication with you about the affairs in the Indies, and the posture of trade there——I hope you left the Great Mogul in good health——

Ramb. Very slightly indisposed of a cold at my departure.

Pol. I heartily forgive you all: so let me see you all embrace one another.——This is the comfort of age, Mr. Worthy.

Sot. Let me embrace you alltogether.—I have found this day two good women—and they have fallen to the

share of my friends—and I will get drunk this night, if the spirit of wine will do it—I'll drink to your happiness, while you are enjoying it.—While you are tasting the joys of Venus, I will swallow down the delights of Bacchus.—I despair of either of your company this month yet——but the justice shall celebrate this night with me.—Come honest justice—I have found one honest justice too.

Wor. Really, Sir, I think you have sufficiently celebrated already.

Sot. No, but I have not——And you, Sir, will be drunk at your children's wedding-night.

Pol. I never drink any thing but coffee, Sir.

Sot. Damn your coffee——

Ramb. Sotmore, thou shalt have justice——Mr. Worthy, I assure you, notwithstanding this humour, the world hath not an honester man.

Wor. It is pity he should besot himself so. Your character of him encourages me to employ some labour in advising him to quit so beastly a pleasure. Come, gentlemen, I desire you would celebrate this day at my house. To-morrow, I will proceed to take all possible measures to your receiving satisfaction for your injuries, and making public example of so great a villain: for the crimes of a magistrate give a greater sanction to sin.

No reverence that church or state attends,
Whose laws the priest or magistrate offends.

EPILOGUE:

SPOKEN BY MRS. YOUNGER.

At length the dreadful hurricane is ended,
And I and spouse are safe together landed.
For after all this mighty fuss about it,
Our play hath ended modestly without it.
But, ladies, did not you too sympathise?
Hey? pray, confess, do all your frowns arise
Because so much of Rape and Rape we bawl?
Or is it, that we have no Rape at all?
  Indeed, our Poet, to oblige the age,
Had brought a dreadful scene upon the stage:
But I, perceiving what his muse would drive at,
Told him the ladies never would connive at,
A downright actual Rape——unless in private.
But notwithstanding what these poets tell us,
Who'd think our beaus were such high-mettled fellows!
  Oh! may our youth, whose vigour is so parlous,
To Italy be wafted with Don Carlos:
There should one victory but give them scope,
They would not leave one maidenhead for the Pope;
Or should some new pope Joan the chair possess,
They'd play the devil with her——holiness.
No nunnery one virgin should enclose,
But new Rome fall by what the old arose.
  'Twas a strange doctrine that Lucretia taught,
When on herself reveng'd her lover's fault!
Heathenish wretch! The pious christian wife,
Tho' ravish'd, still contents herself with life:

So zealous from self-murder we refrain,
We live, tho' sure of ravishing again.
  But may no fears of such a fate affright
The beauteous kind spectators of to-night;
Safe to your husbands' arms may you escape,
And never know that dreadful thing, a Rape.

THE

TRAGEDY OF TRAGEDIES;

OR, THE

LIFE AND DEATH

OF

TOM THUMB THE GREAT.

WITH THE ANNOTATIONS OF

H. SCRIBLERUS SECUNDUS.

FIRST ACTED IN 1730, AND ALTERED IN 1731.

H. SCRIBLERUS SECUNDUS

HIS

PREFACE.

THE town hath seldom been more divided in its opinion than concerning the merit of the following scenes. Whilst some publicly affirmed that no author could produce so fine a piece but Mr. P——, others have with as much vehemence insisted that no one could write anything so bad but Mr. F——.

Nor can we wonder at this dissension about its merit, when the learned world have not unanimously decided even the very nature of this tragedy. For though most of the universities in Europe have honoured it with the name of 'Egregium & maximi pretii opus, tragœdiis tam 'antiquis quàm novis longè anteponendum;' nay, Dr. B——— hath pronounced, 'Citiùs Mævii Æneadem 'quàm Scribleri istius tragœdiam hanc crediderim, cujus 'autorem Senecam ipsum tradidisse haud dubitârim:' and the great Professor Burman hath styled Tom Thumb 'Heroum omnium tragicorum facilè principem:' Nay, though it hath, among other languages, been translated into Dutch, and celebrated with great applause at Amsterdam (where burlesque never came) by the title of Mynheer Vander Thumb, the burgomasters received it with that reverent and silent attention which becometh an audience at a deep tragedy. Notwithstanding all this, there have not been wanting some who have represented these scenes in a ludicrous light; and Mr. D——— hath

been heard to say, with some concern, that he wondered a tragical and Christian nation would permit a representation on its theatre so visibly designed to ridicule and extirpate every thing that is great and solemn among us.

This learned critic and his followers were led into so great an error by that surreptitious and piratical copy which stole last year into the world; with what injustice and prejudice to our Author will be acknowledged, I hope, by every one who shall happily peruse this genuine and original copy. Nor can I help remarking, to the great praise of our Author, that however imperfect the former was, even that faint resemblance of the true Tom Thumb contained sufficient beauties to give it a run of upwards of forty nights to the politest audiences. But, notwithstanding that applause which it received from all the best judges, it was severely censured by some few bad ones, and, I believe, rather maliciously than ignorantly, reported to have been intended a burlesque on the loftiest parts of tragedy, and designed to banish what we generally call fine things from the stage.

Now, if I can set my country right in an affair of this importance, I shall lightly esteem any labour which it may cost. And this I the rather undertake, first, as it is indeed in some measure incumbent on me to vindicate myself from that surreptitious copy before-mentioned, published by some ill-meaning people under my name; secondly, as knowing myself more capable of doing justice to our Author than any other man, as I have given myself more pains to arrive at a thorough understanding of this little piece, having for ten years together read nothing else; in which time, I think, I may modestly presume, with the help of my English

dictionary, to comprehend all the meanings of every word in it.

But should any error of my pen awaken Clariss. Bentleium to enlighten the world with his annotations on our Author, I shall not think that the least reward or happiness arising to me from these my endeavours.

I shall wave at present what hath caused such feuds in the learned world, whether this piece was originally written by Shakespear, though certainly that, were it true, must add a considerable share to its merit; especially with such who are so generous as to buy and commend what they never read, from an implicit faith in the author only: a faith which our age abounds in as much as it can be called deficient in any other.

Let it suffice, that the TRAGEDY OF TRAGEDIES, or The LIFE and DEATH of TOM THUMB, was written in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Nor can the objection made by Mr. D———, that the tragedy must then have been antecedent to the history, have any weight, when we consider, that, though the HISTORY of TOM THUMB, printed by and for Edward M———r, at the Looking-glass on London-bridge, be of a later date, still we must suppose this history to have been transcribed from some other, unless we suppose the writer thereof to be inspired: a gift very faintly contended for by the writers of our age. As to this history's not bearing the stamp of second, third, or fourth edition, I see but little in that objection; editions being very uncertain lights to judge of books by: and perhaps Mr M———r may have joined twenty editions in one, as Mr. C——l hath ere now divided one into twenty.

Nor doth the other argument, drawn from the little care our Author hath taken to keep up the letter of this history, carry any greater force. Are there not instances of plays, wherein the history is so perverted, that we can know the heroes whom they celebrate by no other marks than their names: nay, do we not find the same character placed by different poets in such different lights, that we can discover not the least sameness, or even likeness, in the features? The Sophonisba of Mairet, and of Lee, is a tender, passionate, amorous mistress of Massinissa; Corneille and Mr. Thomson give her no other passion but the love of her country, and make her as cool in her affection to Massinissa as to Syphax. In the two latter, she resembles the character of Queen Elizabeth; in the two former, she is the picture of Mary Queen of Scotland. In short, the one Sophonisba is as different from the other, as the Brutus of Voltaire is from the Marius, jun. of Otway; or as the Minerva is from the Venus of the ancients.

Let us now proceed to a regular examination of the tragedy before us, in which I shall treat separately of the Fable, the Moral, the Characters, the Sentiments, and Diction. And first of the

Fable; which I take to be the most simple imaginable; and, to use the words of an eminent author, 'one, 'regular, and uniform, not charged with a multiplicity of 'incidents, and yet affording several revolutions of for-'tune; by which the passions may be excited, varied, 'and driven to their full tumult of emotion.'——Nor is the action of this tragedy less great than uniform. The spring of all is the love of Tom Thumb for Huncamunca; which caused the quarrel between their majesties in the first act; the passion of Lord Grizzle in the

second; the rebellion, fall of Lord Grizzle and Glumdalca, devouring of Tom Thumb by the Cow, and that bloody catastrophe, in the third.

Nor is the Moral of this excellent tragedy less noble than the fable; it teaches these two instructive lessons, *viz.:* That human happiness is exceeding transient: and that death is the certain end of all men: the former whereof is inculcated by the fatal end of Tom Thumb: the latter, by that of all the other personages.

The Characters are, I think, sufficiently described in the Dramatis Personæ; and I believe we shall find few plays where greater care is taken to maintain them throughout, and to preserve in every speech that characteristical mark which distinguishes them from each other. 'But, (says Mr. D———) how well doth the 'character of Tom Thumb, whom we must call the hero 'of this tragedy, if it hath any hero, agree with the pre-'cepts of Aristotle, who defineth "Tragedy to be the '"imitation of a short, but perfect action, containing a '"just greatness in itself," &c. What greatness can be 'in a fellow, whom history relateth to have been no 'higher than a span?' This gentleman seemeth to think, with Serjeant Kite, that the greatness of a man's soul is in proportion to that of his body; the contrary of which is affirmed by our English physiognominical writers. Besides, if I understand Aristotle right, he speaketh only of the greatness of the action, and not of the person.

As for the Sentiments and the Diction, which now only remain to be spoken to, I thought I could afford them no stronger justification, than by producing parallel passages out of the best of our English writers. Whether

this sameness of thought and expression, which I have quoted from them, proceeded from an agreement in their way of thinking, or whether they have borrowed from our Author, I leave the reader to determine. I shall adventure to affirm this of the Sentiments of our Author; that they are generally the most familiar which I have ever met with, and at the same time delivered with the highest dignity of phrase; which brings me to speak of his Diction.——Here I shall only beg one postulatum, *viz.* That the greatest perfection of the language of a tragedy is, that it is not to be understood; which granted (as I think it must be) it will necessarily follow, that the only way to avoid this is by being too high or too low for the understanding, which will comprehend every thing within its reach. Those two extremities of style Mr. Dryden illustrates by the familiar image of two inns, which I shall term the aërial and the subterrestrial.

Horace goes farther, and sheweth when it is proper to call at one of these inns, and when at the other:

> Telephus et Peleus, cùm pauper et exul uterque,
> Projicit ampullas et sesquipedalia verba.

That he approveth of the sesquipedalia verba, is plain; for had not Telephus and Peleus used this sort of Diction in prosperity, they could not have dropt it in adversity. The aërial inn, therefore (says Horace), is proper only to be frequented by princes and other great men, in the highest affluence of fortune; the subterrestrial is appointed for the entertainment of the poorer sort of people only, whom Horace advises,

> ———dolere sermone pedestri.

The true meaning of both which citations is, that bombast is the proper language for joy, and doggrel

for grief; the latter of which is literally implied in the sermo pedestris, as the former is in the sesquipedalia verba.

Cicero recommendeth the former of these, 'Quid est 'tam furiosum vel tragicum quàm verborum sonitus in-'anis, nullâ subjectâ sententiâ neque scientiâ?' What can be so proper for tragedy as a set of big sounding words, so contrived together as to convey no meaning? which I shall one day or other prove to be the sublime of Longinus. Ovid declareth absolute for the latter inn:

Omne genus scripti gravitate tragœdia vincit.

Tragedy hath, of all writings, the greatest share in the Bathos; which is the profound of Scriblerus.

I shall not presume to determine which of these two styles be properer for tragedy——It sufficeth, that our Author excelleth in both. He is very rarely within sight through the whole play, either rising higher than the eye of your understanding can soar, or sinking lower than it careth to stoop. But here it may, perhaps, be observed, that I have given more frequent instances of authors who have imitated him in the sublime, than in the contrary. To which I answer, first, Bombast being properly a redundancy of genius, instances of this nature occur in poets, whose names do more honour to our Author, than the writers in the doggrel, which proceeds from a cool, calm, weighty way of thinking. Instances whereof are most frequently to be found in authors of a lower class. Secondly, That the works of such authors are difficultly found at all. Thirdly, That it is a very hard task to read them, in order to extract these flowers from them. And lastly, it is very difficult to transplant them at all; they being like some flowers of a very nice

nature, which will flourish in no soil but their own: for it is easy to transcribe a thought, but not the want of one. The EARL OF ESSEX, for instance, is a little garden of choice rarities, whence you can scarce transplant one line so as to preserve its original beauty. This must account to the reader for his missing the names of several of his acquaintance, which he had certainly found here, had I ever read their works; for which, if I have not a just esteem, I can at least say with Cicero, 'Quæ non 'contemno, quippè quæ nunquam legerim.' However, that the reader may meet with due satisfaction in this point, I have a young commentator from the university, who is reading over all the modern tragedies, at five shillings a dozen, and collecting all that they have stole from our Author, which will be shortly added as an appendix to this work.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

King Arthur, a passionate sort of king, husband to Queen Dollallolla, of whom he stands a little in fear; father to Huncamunca, whom he is very fond of, and in love with Glumdalca,	MR. MULLART.
Tom Thumb the Great, a little hero with a great soul, something violent in his temper, which is a little abated by his love for Huncamunca,	YOUNG VERHUYCK.
Ghost of Gaffer Thumb, a whimsical sort of Ghost,	MR. LACY.
Lord Grizzle, extremely zealous for the liberty of the subject, very choleric in his temper, and in love with Huncamunca,	MR. JONES.
Merlin, a conjurer, and in some sort father to Tom Thumb,	MR. HALLAM.
Noodle, *Doodle*, Courtiers in place, and consequently of that party that is uppermost,	MR. REYNOLDS. MR. WATHAN.
Foodle, a courtier that is out of place, and consequently of that party that is undermost,	MR. AYRES.
Bailiff and Follower, of the party of the plaintiff,	MR. PETERSON. MR. HICKS.
Parson, of the side of the church,	MR. WATSON.

WOMEN.

Queen Dollallolla, wife to King Arthur, and mother to Huncamunca, a woman intirely faultless, saving that she is a little given to drink, a little too much a virago towards her husband, and in love with Tom Thumb,	MRS. MULLART.
The Princess Huncamunca, daughter to their majesties King Arthur and Queen Dollallolla, of a very sweet, gentle, and amorous disposition, equally in love with Lord Grizzle and Tom Thumb, and desirous to be married to them both,	MRS. JONES.
Glumdalca, of the Giants, a captive Queen, beloved by the King, but in love with Tom Thumb,	MRS. DOVE.
Cleora, Maids of honour, in love with	NOODLE.
Mustacha, Maids of honour, in love with	DOODLE.

COURTIERS, GUARDS, REBELS, DRUMS, TRUMPETS, THUNDER AND LIGHTNING.

SCENE, THE COURT OF KING ARTHUR, AND A PLAIN THEREABOUTS.

TOM THUMB THE GREAT.

ACT I. SCENE I.

SCENE, *the Palace.*

DOODLE, NOODLE.

DOODLE.

SURE such a [1]day as this was never seen!
The sun himself, on this auspicious day,
Shines like a beau in a new birth-day suit:
This down the seams embroider'd, that the beams.
All nature wears one universal grin.

[1] Corneille recommends some very remarkable day wherein to fix the action of a tragedy. This the best of our tragical writers have understood to mean a day remarkable for the serenity of the sky, or what we generally call a fine summer's day: so that, according to this their exposition, the same months are proper for tragedy which are proper for pastoral. Most of our celebrated English tragedies, as Cato, Mariamne, Tamerlane, &c., begin with their observations on the morning. Lee seems to have come the nearest to this beautiful description of our author's:

> The morning dawns with an unwonted crimson,
> The flowers all odorous seem, the garden birds
> Sing louder, and the laughing sun ascends
> The gaudy earth with an unusual brightness,
> All nature smiles. CÆS. BORG.

Massinissa in the new Sophonisba is also a favourite of the sun;

> ——————The sun too seems,
> As conscious of my joy, with broader eye
> To look abroad the world, and all things smile
> Like Sophonisba.

Nood. This day, O Mr. Doodle, is a day
Indeed!——A day, [1]we never saw before.
The mighty [2]Thomas Thumb victorious comes;
Millions of giants crowd his chariot wheels,
[3]Giants! to whom the giants in Guildhall

Memnon, in the Persian Princess, makes the sun decline rising, that he may not peep on objects which would profane his brightness.

——————The morning rises slow,
And all those ruddy streaks that us'd to paint
The day's approach are lost in clouds, as if
The horrors of the night had sent 'em back,
To warn the sun he should not leave the sea,
To peep, &c.

[1] This line is highly conformable to the beautiful simplicity of the ancients. It hath been copied by almost every modern.

Not to be is not to be in woe. STATE OF INNOCENCE.
Love is not sin but where 'tis sinful love. DON SEBASTIAN.
Nature is nature, Lælius. SOPHONISBA.
Men are but men, we did not make ourselves. REVENGE.

[2] Dr. B——y reads; The mighty Tall-mast Thumb. Mr. D——s; The mighty Thumbing Thumb. Mr. T——d reads; Thundering. I think Thomas more agreeable to the great simplicity so apparent in our author.

[3] That learned historian Mr. S——n, in the third number of his criticism on our Author, takes great pains to explode this passage. 'It is,' says he, 'difficult to guess what giants are here meant, unless the giant Despair in the Pilgrim's Progress, or the giant Greatness in the Royal Villain; for I have heard of no other sort of giants in the reign of king Arthur.' Petrus Burmannus makes three Tom Thumbs, one whereof he supposes to have been the same person whom the Greeks call Hercules; and that by these giants are to be understood the Centaurs slain by that hero. Another Tom Thumb he contends to have been no other than the Hermes Trismegistus of the ancients. The third Tom Thumb he places under the reign of king Arthur; to which third Tom Thumb, says he, the actions of the other two were attributed. Now, though I know that this opinion is supported by an assertion of Justus Lipsius, 'Thomam illum Thumbum non alium quàm Herculem fuisse satis constat,' yet shall I venture to oppose one line of Mr. Midwinter against them all,

In Arthur's court Tom Thumb did live.

Are infant dwarfs. They frown, and foam, and roar,
While Thumb, regardless of their noise, rides on.
So some cock-sparrow in a farmer's yard,
Hops at the head of an huge flock of turkeys.

Dood. When goody Thumb first brought this Thomas forth,
The Genius of our land triumphant reign'd;
Then, then, O Arthur! did thy Genius reign.

Nood. They tell me it is [1]whisper'd in the books
Of all our sages, that this mighty hero,
By Merlin's art begot, hath not a bone
Within his skin, but is a lump of gristle.

Dood. Then 'tis a gristle of no mortal kind;

'But then,' says Dr. B——y, 'if we place Tom Thumb in the court of king Arthur, it will be proper to place that court out of Britain, where no giants were ever heard of.' Spencer, in his Fairy Queen, is of another opinion, where, describing Albion, he says,

> ———Far within a savage nation dwelt
> Of hideous giants.

And in the same canto,

> Then Elfar, with two brethren giants had,
> The one of which had two heads———
> The other three.

Risum teneatis, amici.

[1] 'To whisper in books,' says Mr. D——s, 'is arrant nonsense.' I am afraid this learned man does not sufficiently understand the extensive meaning of the word Whisper. If he had rightly understood what is meant by the 'senses whisp'ring the soul,' in the Persian Princess, or what 'whisp'ring like winds' is in Aurengzebe, or like thunder in another author, he would have understood this. Emmeline in Dryden sees a voice, but she was born blind, which is an excuse Panthea cannot plead in Cyrus, who hears a sight.

> ———Your description will surpass
> All fiction, painting, or dumb shew of horror,
> That ever ears yet heard, or eyes beheld.

When Mr. D——s understands these, he will understand whispering in books.

Some God, my Noodle, stept into the place
Of Gaffer Thumb, and more than half [1]begot
This mighty Tom.

Nood.——[2] Sure he was sent express
From Heav'n to be the pillar of our state.
Though small his body be, so very small
A chairman's leg is more than twice as large,
Yet is his soul like any mountain big,
[3]So doth this mouse contain a mighty mountain.

Dood. Mountain, indeed! So terrible his name,
[4]The giant nurses frighten children with it,
And cry Tom Thumb is come, and, if you are
Naughty, will surely take the child away.

Nood. But hark! [5] these trumpets speak the king's approach.

Dood. He comes most luckily for my petition.

[*Flourish.*

[1] —Some ruffian stepped into his father's place,
And more than half begot him. MARY Q. OF SCOTS.

[2] —For Ulamar seems sent express from Heaven
To civilize this rugged Indian clime. LIBERTY ASSERTED.

[3] 'Omne majus continet in se minus, sed minus non in se majus continere potest,' says Scaliger in Thumbo. I suppose he would have cavilled at these beautiful lines in the Earl of Essex;

———Thy most inveterate soul,
That looks through the foul prison of thy body.

And at those of Dryden,

The palace is without too well design'd;
Conduct me in, for I will view thy mind. AURENGZEBE.

[4] Mr. Banks hath copied this almost verbatim.

It was enough to say, here's Essex come,
And nurses still'd their children with the fright. E. OF ESSEX.

[5] The trumpet in a tragedy is generally as much as to say, Enter king, which makes Mr. Banks, in one of his plays, call it the trumpet's formal sound.

SCENE II.

KING, QUEEN, GRIZZLE, NOODLE, DOODLE, FOODLE.

King. [1] Let nothing but a face of joy appear;
The man who frowns this day shall lose his head,
That he may have no face to frown withal.
Smile Dollallolla——Ha! what wrinkled sorrow,
[2] Hangs, sits, lies, frowns upon thy knitted brow?
Whence flow those tears fast down thy blubber'd cheeks,
Like a swoln gutter, gushing through the streets?
Queen. [3] Excess of joy, my lord, I've heard folks say,
Give tears as certain as excess of grief.
King. If it be so, let all men cry for joy,

[1] Phraortes in the Captives seems to have been acquainted with king Arthur.

Proclaim a festival for seven days' space,
Let the court shine in all its pomp and lustre,
Let all our streets resound with shouts of joy;
Let music's care-dispelling voice be heard;
The sumptuous banquet, and the flowing goblet
Shall warm the cheek, and fill the heart with gladness.
Astarte shall sit mistress of the feast.

[2] Repentance frowns on thy contracted brow. SOPHONISBA.
Hung on his clouded brow, I mark'd despair. Ibid.
——————A sullen gloom
Scowls on his brow. BUSIRIS.

[3] Plato is of this opinion, and so is Mr. Banks;
Behold these tears sprung with fresh pain and joy.
E. OF ESSEX.

[1] Till my whole court be drowned with their tears;
Nay, till they overflow my utmost land,
And leave me nothing but the sea to rule.
Dood. My liege, I a petition have here got.
King. Petition me no petitions, Sir, to-day;
Let other hours be set apart for business.
To day it is our pleasure to be [2] drunk.
And this our queen shall be as drunk as we.

[1] These floods are very frequent in the tragic authors.

Near to some murmuring brook I'll lay me down,
Whose waters, if they should too shallow flow,
My tears shall swell them up till I will drown.
LEE'S SOPHONISBA.

Pouring forth tears at such a lavish rate,
That were the world on fire they might have drown'd
The wrath of Heav'n, and quench'd the mighty ruin.
MITHRIDATES.

One author changes the waters of grief to those of joy.

———These tears that sprung from tides of grief,
Are now augmented to a flood of joy. CYRUS THE GREAT.

Another,

Turns all the streams of heat, and makes them flow
In pity's channel. ROYAL VILLAIN.

One drowns himself.

———Pity like a torrent pours me down,
Now I am drowning all within a deluge. ANNA BULLEN.

Cyrus drowns the whole world.

Our swelling grief
Shall melt into a deluge, and the world
Shall drown in tears. CYRUS THE GREAT.

[2] An expression vastly beneath the dignity of tragedy, says Mr. D——s, yet we find the word he cavils at in the mouth of Mithridates less properly used, and applied to a more terrible idea;

I would be drunk with death. MITHRIDATES.

The author of the new Sophonisba taketh hold of this monosyllable, and uses it pretty much to the same purpose:

The Carthaginian sword with Roman blood
Was drunk.

Queen. (Though I already [1] half seas over am)
If the capacious goblet overflow
With arrack punch——'fore George! I'll see it out;
Of rum and brandy I'll not taste a drop.

King. Though rack, in punch, eight shillings be a quart,
And rum and brandy be no more than six,
Rather than quarrel you shall have your will.

[*Trumpets.*

But, ha! the warrior comes; the great Tom Thumb,
The little hero, giant-killing boy,
Preserver of my kingdom, is arrived.

SCENE III.

TOM THUMB *to them with* OFFICERS, PRISONERS, *and* ATTENDANTS.

King. [2] Oh! welcome most, most welcome to my arms.
What gratitude can thank away the debt
Your valour lays upon me?

Queen. ——————[3] Oh! ye gods! [*Aside.*

I would ask Mr. D——s, which gives him the best idea, a drunken king, or a drunken sword?
Mr. Tate dresses up king Arthur's resolutions in heroic;

Merry, my lord, o'th' captain's humour right,
I am resolv'd to be dead drunk to-night.

Lee also uses this charming word;

Love's the drunkenness of the mind. GLORIANA.

[1] Dryden hath borrowed this, and applied it improperly;

I'm half seas o'er in death. CLEOM.

[2] This figure is in great use among the tragedians;

'Tis therefore, therefore 'tis. VICTIM.

I long, repent, repent, and long again. BUSIRIS.

[3] A tragical exclamation.

Thumb. When I'm not thank'd at all, I'm thank'd enough.
[1] I've done my duty, and I've done no more.
Queen. Was ever such a godlike creature seen?
[*Aside.*
King. Thy modesty's a [2] candle to thy merit,
It shines itself, and shews thy merit too.
But say, my boy, where didst thou leave the giants?
Thumb. My liege, without the castle gates they stand,
The castle-gates too low for their admittance.
King. What look they like!
Thumb. Like nothing but themselves.
Queen. [3] And sure thou art like nothing but thyself.
[*Aside.*
King. Enough! the vast idea fills my soul.
I see them, yes, I see them now before me:
The monstrous, ugly, barb'rous sons of whores.
But ha! what form majestic strikes our eyes?
[4] So perfect, that it seems to have been drawn

[1] This line is copied verbatim in the Captives.

[2] We find a candlestick for this candle in two celebrated authors:

> ————Each star withdraws
> His golden head, and burns within the socket. NERO.
>
> A soul grown old and sunk into the socket. SEBASTIAN.

[3] This simile occurs very frequently among the dramatic writers of both kinds.

[4] Mr. Lee hath stolen this thought from our Author;

> ————This perfect face, drawn by the Gods in council,
> Which they were long in making. LUC. JUN. BRUT.
>
> ————At his birth the heavenly council paus'd,
> And then at last cry'd out, This is a man!

Dryden hath improv'd this hint to the utmost perfection:

> So perfect that the very gods who form'd you, wonder'd
> At their own skill, and cry'd, A lucky hit

By all the gods in council: so fair she is,
That surely at her birth the council paus'd,
And then at length cry'd out, This is a woman!
Thumb. Then were the gods mistaken—she is not
A woman, but a giantess——whom we,
[1] With much ado, have made a shift to hawl
Within the town; [2] for she is by a foot
Shorter than all her subject giants were.
Glum. We yesterday were both a queen and wife;
One hundred thousand giants own'd our sway.
Twenty whereof were married to ourself.
Queen. Oh! happy state of giantism——where husbands
Like mushrooms grow, whilst hapless we are forc'd
To be content, nay, happy thought, with one.
Glum. But then to lose them all in one black day,
That the same sun, which, rising, saw me wife
To twenty giants, setting should behold

> Has mended our design! Their envy hind'red,
> Or you had been immortal, and a pattern,
> When Heaven would work for ostentation sake,
> To copy out again. ALL FOR LOVE.

Banks prefers the works of Michael Angelo to that of the gods;

> A pattern for the gods to make a man by,
> Or Michael Angelo to form a statue.

[1] 'It is impossible,' says Mr. W——, 'sufficiently to admire this natural easy line.'

[2] This tragedy, which in most points resembles the ancients, differs from them in this, that it assigns the same honour to lowness of stature, which they did to height. The gods and heroes in Homer and Virgil are continually described higher by the head than their followers, the contrary of which is observ'd by our author. In short, to exceed on either side is equally admirable; and a man of three foot is as wonderful a sight as a man of nine.

Me widow'd of them all.——[1] My worn out heart,
That ship, leaks fast, and the great heavy lading,
My soul, will quickly sink.

Queen. ———Madam, believe
I view your sorrows with a woman's eye;
But learn to bear them with what strength you may,
To-morrow we will have our grenadiers
Drawn out before you, and you then shall choose
What husbands you think fit.

Glum. ———[2] Madam, I am
Your most obedient, and most humble servant.

King. Think, mighty princess, think this court your own,
Nor think the landlord me, this house my inn;
Call for whate'er you will you'll nothing pay.
[3] I feel a sudden pain within my breast,
Nor know I whether it arise from love
Or only the wind-cholic. Time must shew.
Oh Thumb! what do we to thy valour owe?
Ask some reward, great as we can bestow.

Thumb. [4] I ask not kingdoms, I can conquer those,
I ask not money, money I've enough;

[1] My blood leaks fast, and the great heavy lading
My soul will quickly sink, MITHRID.
My soul is like a ship. INJUR'D LOVE.

[2] This well-bred line seems to be copied in the Persian Princess:

To be your humblest, and most faithful slave.

[3] This doubt of the king puts me in mind of a passage in the Captives, where the noise of feet is mistaken for the rustling of leaves,

———Methinks I hear
The sound of feet;
No; 'twas the wind that shook yon cypress boughs.

[4] Mr. Dryden seems to have this passage in his eye in the first page of Love Triumphant.

For what I've done, and what I mean to do,
For giants slain, and giants yet unborn,
Which I will slay,——if this be call'd a debt,
Take my receipt in full——I ask but this,
[1] To sun myself in Huncamunca's eyes.

King. Prodigious bold request. }
Queen. ——[2] Be still, my soul. } [*Aside.*

Thumb. [3] My heart is at the threshold of your mouth,
And waits its answer there.——Oh! do not frown,
I've try'd to reason's tune to tune my soul,
But love did overwind and crack the string.
Though Jove in Thunder had cry'd out, YOU SHAN'T,
I shou'd have lov'd her still——for oh, strange fate,
Then when I lov'd her least I lov'd her most!

King. It is resolv'd——the princess is your own.

Thumb. [4] Oh! happy, happy, happy, happy Thumb.

Queen. Consider, Sir, reward your soldier's merit, but give not Huncamunca to Tom Thumb.

[1] Don Carlos, in the Revenge, suns himself in the charms of his mistress,

While in the lustre of her charms I lay.

[2] A tragical phrase much in use.

[3] This speech hath been taken to pieces by several tragical authors, who seem to have rifled it, and shared its beauty amongst them.

My soul waits at the portal of thy breast,
To ravish from thy lips the welcome news. ANNA BULLEN.

My soul stands list'ning at my ears. CYRUS THE GREAT.

Love to his tune my jarring heart would bring,
But reason overwinds, and cracks the string. D. OF GUISE.

——————I should have lov'd,
Though Jove in muttering thunder had forbid it.
NEW SOPHONISBA.

And when it (*my heart*) wild resolves to love no more,
Then is the triumph of excessive love. Ibid.

[4] Massinissa is one fourth less happy than Tom Thumb.

Oh! happy, happy, happy. Ibid.

King. Tom Thumb; Odzooks, my wide extended realm
Knows not a name so glorious as Tom Thumb.
Let Macedonia Alexander boast,
Let Rome her Cæsars and her Scipios shew,
Her Messieurs France, let Holland boast Mynheers,
Ireland her O's, her Mac's let Scotland boast,
Let England boast no other than Tom Thumb.

Queen. Though greater yet his boasted merit was,
He shall not have my daughter, that is pos'.

King. Ha! sayst thou Dollallolla!

Queen. ————I say he shan't.

King. [1] Then by our royal self we swear you lie.

Queen. [2] Who but a dog, who but a dog
Would use me as thou dost? Me, who have lain
[3] These twenty years so loving by thy side;
But I will be reveng'd. I'll hang myself,
Then tremble all who did this match persuade,
[4] For riding on a cat from high I'll fall,
And squirt down royal vengeance on you all.

Food. [5] Her majesty the queen is in a passion.

King [6] Be she, or be she not——I'll to the girl

[1] No by myself. ANNA BULLEN.

[2] ————Who caus'd
This dreadful revolution in my fate.
Ulamar. Who but a dog, who but a dog?
LIBERTY ASSERTED.

[3] ————A bride,
Who twenty years lay loving by your side. BANKS.

[4] For borne upon a cloud from high I'll fall,
And rain down royal vengeance on you all. ALBION QUEENS.

[5] An information very like this we have in the Tragedy of Love; where Cyrus having stormed in the most violent manner, Cyaxares observed very calmly,

Why nephew Cyrus—you are mov'd.

[6] 'Tis in your choice,
Love me, or love me not. CONQUEST OF GRANADA.

And pave the way, oh Thumb——Now by ourself,
We were indeed a pretty king of clouts
To truckle in her will——For when by force
Or art the wife the husband over-reaches,
Give him the petticoat, and her the breeches.

Thumb. [1] Whisper ye winds that Huncamunca's mine;
Echoes repeat, that Huncamunca's mine!
The dreadful bus'ness of the war is o'er,
And beauty, heav'nly beauty! crowns my toils!
I've thrown the bloody garment now aside
And hymeneal sweets invite my bride.
So when some chimney-sweeper all the day
Hath through dark paths pursu'd the sooty way,
At night, to wash his hands and face he flies,
And in his t'other shirt with his Brickdusta lies.

SCENE IV.

GRIZZLE, *solus.*

[2] Where art thou, Grizzle! where are now thy glories?
Where are the drums that waken thee to honour?
Greatness is a lac'd coat from Monmouth-street,
Which fortune lends us for a day to wear,
To-morrow puts it on another's back.
The spiteful sun but yesterday survey'd
His rival high as Saint Paul's cupola;
Now may he see me as Fleet-ditch laid low.

[1] There is not one beauty in this charming speech, but what hath been borrowed by almost every tragic writer.

[2] Mr. Banks has (I wish I could not say too servilely) imitated this of Grizzle in his Earl of Essex.

Where art thou, Essex, &c.

SCENE V.

QUEEN, GRIZZLE.

Queen. [1] Teach me to scold, prodigious-minded Grizzle.
Mountain of treason, ugly as the devil,
Teach this confounded hateful mouth of mine
To spout forth words malicious as thyself,
Words which might shame all Billingsgate to speak.
Griz. Far be it from my pride to think my tongue
Your royal lips can in that art instruct,
Wherein you so excel. But may I ask,
Without offence, wherefore my queen would scold?
Queen. Wherefore? Oh! blood and thunder! han't you heard
(What ev'ry corner of the court resounds)
That little Thumb will be a great man made?
Griz. I heard it, I confess——for who, alas!
[2] Can always stop his ears——But wou'd my teeth,
By grinding knives had first been set on edge.
Queen. Would I had heard, at the still noon of night,
The hallalloo of fire in ev'ry street!
Odsbobs! I have a mind to hang myself,
To think I should a grandmother be made
By such a rascal———Sure the king forgets,
When in a pudding, by his mother put,
The bastard, by a tinker, on a style
Was dropp'd.—O, good Lord Grizzle! can I bear

[1] The Countess of Nottingham in the Earl of Essex is apparently acquainted with Dollallolla.

[2] Grizzle was not probably possessed of that glew of which Mr. Banks speaks in his Cyrus.

I'll glew my ears to ev'ry word.

To see him from a pudding mount the throne?
Or can, Oh can! my Huncamunca bear
To take a pudding's offspring to her arms?

Griz. Oh horror! horror! horror! cease, my queen,
[1] Thy voice, like twenty screech-owls, wracks my brain.

Queen. Then rouse thy spirit—we may yet prevent
This hated match———

Griz. ———We will[2]; nor fate itself,
Should it conspire with Thomas Thumb, should cause it.
I'll swim through seas; I'll ride upon the clouds;
I'll dig the earth; I'll blow out ev'ry fire;
I'll rave; I'll rant; I'll rise; I'll rush; I'll roar;
Fierce as the man whom[3] smiling dolphins bore,
From the prosaic to poetic shore.
I'll tear the scoundrel into twenty pieces.

Queen. Oh, no! prevent the match, but hurt him not;
For, though I would not have him have my daughter,
Yet can we kill the man that kill'd the giants?

Griz. I tell you, Madam, it was all a trick,
He made the giants first, and then he kill'd them;
As fox-hunters bring foxes to the wood,
And then with hounds they drive them out again.

Queen. How! have you seen no giants? Are there not,
Now, in the yard, ten thousand proper giants?

[1] Screech-owls, dark ravens and amphibious monsters,
Are screaming in that voice. MARY Q. OF SCOTS.

[2] The reader may see all the beauties of this speech in a late ode, called the Naval Lyrick.

[3] This epithet to a dolphin doth not give one so clear an idea as were to be wished; a smiling fish seemingly a little more difficult to be imagined than a flying fish. Mr. Dryden is of opinion, that smiling is the property of reason, and that no irrational creature can smile.

Smiles not allowed to beasts from reason move.

STATE OF INNOCENCE.

Griz. [1] Indeed I cannot positively tell,
But firmly do believe there is not one.
Queen. Hence! from my sight! thou traitor, hie away;
By all my stars! thou enviest Tom Thumb.
Go, sirrah! go, [2] hie away!——thou art
A setting-dog, be gone.
Griz. Madam, I go,
Tom Thumb shall feel the vengeance you have rais'd:
So, when two dogs are fighting in the streets,
With a third dog one of the two dogs meets,
With angry teeth he bites him to the bone,
And this dog smarts for what that dog has done.

SCENE VI.

QUEEN, *sola.*

But whither shall I go?——Alack a day!
I love Tom Thumb——but must not tell him so;

[1] These lines are written in the same key with those in the Earl of Essex.

Why sayst thou so? I love thee well, indeed
I do, and thou shalt find by this, 'tis true.

Or with this in Cyrus;

The most heroic that ever was.

And with above half of the modern tragedies.

[2] Aristotle, in that excellent work of his, which is very justly styled his Master-piece, earnestly recommends using the terms of art, however coarse or even indecent they may be. Mr. Tate is of the same opinion.

BRU. Do not, like young hawks, fetch a course about,
Your game flies fair.
FRA. Do not fear it.
He answers you in your hawking phrase. INJUR'D LOVE.

I think these two great authorities are sufficient to justify Dollallolla in the use of the phrase, 'Hie away, hie!' when in the same line she says she is speaking to a setting-dog.

For what's a woman when her virtue's gone?
A coat without its lace; a wig out of buckle;
A stocking with a hole in't——I can't live
Without my virtue, or without Tom Thumb.
[1] Then let me weigh them in two equal scales,
In this scale put my virtue, that Tom Thumb,
Alas! Tom Thumb is heavier than my virtue.
But hold!—perhaps I may be left a widow:
This match prevented, then Tom Thumb is mine:
In that dear hope I will forget my pain.
So, when some wench to Tothill Bridewell's sent,
With beating hemp and flogging she's content,
She hopes in time to ease her present pain,
At length is free and walks the streets again.

ACT II. SCENE I.

SCENE, *the Street.*

BAILIFF, FOLLOWER.

BAILIFF.

COME on, my trusty follower, come on,
This day discharge thy duty, and at night
A double mug of beer, and beer shall glad thee.
Stand here by me, this way must Noodle pass.

[1] We meet with such another pair of scales in Dryden's King Arthur.

Arthur and Oswald and their different fates,
Are weighing now within the scales of Heaven.

Also in Sebastian.

This hour my lot is weighing in the scales.

Follow. No more, no more, O Bailiff! every word
Inspires my soul with virtue———Oh! I long
To meet the enemy in the street—and nab him:
To lay arresting hands upon his back,
And drag him trembling to the spunging-house.
Bail. There when I have him, I will spunge upon him.
[1] Oh! glorious thought, by the sun, moon, and stars,
I will enjoy it, though it be in thought!
Yes, yes, my follower, I will enjoy it.
Follow. Enjoy it then some other time, for now
Our prey approaches.
Bail. Let us retire.

SCENE II.

TOM THUMB, NOODLE, BAILIFF, FOLLOWER.

Thumb. Trust me, my Noodle, I am wonderous sick;
For though I love the gentle Huncamunca,
Yet at the thought of marriage I grow pale:
For Oh!—[2] but swear thou'lt keep it ever secret,
I will unfold a tale will make thee stare.
Nood. I swear by lovely Huncamunca's charms.
Thumb. Then know—[3] my grandmamma hath often said,
Tom Thumb, beware of marriage.

[1] Mr. Rowe is generally imagined to have taken some hints from this scene in his character of Bajazet; but as he, of all the tragic writers, bears the least resemblance to our Author in his diction, I am unwilling to imagine he would condescend to copy him in this particular.

[2] This method of surprising an audience by raising their expectation to the highest pitch, and then baulking it, hath been practis'd with great success by most of our tragical authors.

[3] Almeyda in Sebastian is in the same distress;

Sometimes methinks I hear the groan of ghosts,
Thin hollow sounds and lamentable screams;

Nood. Sir, I blush
To think a warrior, great in arms as you,
Should be affrighted by his grandmamma;
Can an old woman's empty dreams deter
The blooming hero from the virgin's arms?
Think of the joy that will your soul alarm,
When in her fond embraces clasp'd you lie,
While on her panting breast dissolv'd in bliss,
You pour out all Tom Thumb in every kiss.

Thumb. Oh! Noodle, thou hast fir'd my eager soul;
Spite of my grandmother she shall be mine;
I'll hug, caress, I'll eat her up with love:
Whole days, and nights, and years shall be too short
For our enjoyment, every sun shall rise
[1] Blushing to see us in our bed together.

Nood. Oh, Sir! this purpose of your soul pursue.

Bail. Oh! Sir! I have an action against you.

Nood. At whose suit is it?

Bail. At your taylor's, Sir.
Your taylor put this warrant in my hands,
And I arrest you, Sir, at his commands.

Then like a dying echo from afar
My mother's voice that cries, Wed not, Almeyda;
Forewarn'd, Almeyda, marriage is thy crime.

[1] 'As very well he may, if he hath any modesty in him,' says Mr. D——s. The author of Busiris is extremely zealous to prevent the sun's blushing at any indecent object; and therefore on all such occasions he addresses himself to the sun, and desires him to keep out of his way.

Rise never more, O sun! let night prevail,
Eternal darkness close the world's wide scene. BUSIRIS.

Sun, hide thy face, and put the world in mourning. Ibid.

Mr. Banks makes the sun perform the office of Hymen; and therefore not likely to be disgusted at such a sight.

The sun sets forth like a gay brideman with you.
MARY Q. OF SCOTS.

Thumb. Ha! dogs! Arrest my friend before my face!
Think you Tom Thumb will suffer this disgrace!
But let vain cowards threaten by their word,
Tom Thumb shall shew his anger by his sword.
[*Kills the bailiff and his follower.*

Bail. Oh! I am slain!

Fol. I am murdered also,
And to the shades, the dismal shades below,
My bailiff's faithful follower I go.

Nood. [1] Go then to hell like rascals as you are,
And give our service to the bailiffs there.

Thumb. Thus perish all the bailiffs in the land,
Till debtors at noon-day shall walk the streets,
And no one fear a bailiff or his writ.

SCENE III.

The PRINCESS HUNCAMUNCA'S *Apartment.*

HUNCAMUNCA, CLEORA, MUSTACHA.

Hunc. [2] Give me some music—see that it be sad.

CLEORA *sings.*

I.

Cupid, ease a love-sick maid,
Bring thy quiver to her aid;
With equal ardour wound the swain:
Beauty should never sigh in vain.

[1] Neurmahal sends the same message to heaven;

For I would have you, when you upwards move,
Speak kindly of us to our friends above. AURENGZEBE.

We find another to hell, in the Persian Princess;

Villain, get thee down
To hell, and tell them that the fray's begun.

[2] Anthony gives the same command in the same words.

II.

Let him feel the pleasing smart,
Drive the arrow through his heart;
When one you wound, you then destroy;
When both you kill, you kill with joy.

Hunc. [1] O Tom Thumb! Tom Thumb! wherefore art thou Tom Thumb?
Why hadst thou not been born of royal race?
Why had not mighty Bantam been thy father?
Or else the king of Brentford, Old or New?

Must. I am surpris'd that your Highness can give yourself a moment's uneasiness about that little insignificant fellow, [2] Tom Thumb the Great—one properer for a plaything than a husband.—Were he my husband his horns should be as long as his body.—If you had fallen in love with a grenadier, I should not have wonder'd at it.—If you had fallen in love with something; but to fall in love with nothing!

Hunc. Cease, my Mustacha, on thy duty cease.
The Zephyr, when in flow'ry vales it plays,
Is not so soft, so sweet as Thummy's breath.
The dove is not so gentle to its mate.

Must. The dove is every bit as proper for a husband. ——Alas! Madam, there's not a beau about the court looks so little like a man.—He is a perfect butterfly, a thing without substance, and almost without shadow too.

Hunc. This rudeness is unseasonable, desist;
Or I shall think this railing comes from love.

[1] Oh! Marius, Marius, wherefore art thou Marius. OTWAY'S MARIUS.

[2] Nothing is more common than these seeming contradictions; such as,

Haughty weakness. VICTIM.

Great small world. NOAH'S FLOOD.

Tom Thumb's a creature of that charming form,
That no one can abuse, unless they love, him.
Must. Madam, the king.

SCENE IV.

KING, HUNCAMUNCA.

King. Let all but Huncamunca leave the room.
[*Exeunt* Cleora *and* Mustacha.
Daughter, I have observ'd of late some grief
Unusual in your countenance——your eyes,
[1] That, like two open windows us'd to shew
The lovely beauty of the rooms within,
Have now two blinds before them.—What is the cause?
Say, have you not enough of meat and drink?
We've given strict orders not to have you stinted.
Hunc. Alas! my lord, I value not myself,
That once I eat two fowls and half a pig;
[2] Small is that praise! but oh! a maid may want
What she can neither eat nor drink.

[1] Lee hath improv'd this metaphor.

Dost thou not view joy peeping from my eyes,
The casements open'd wide to gaze on thee?
So Rome's glad citizens to windows rise,
When they some young triumpher fain would see. GLORIANA.

[2] Almahide hath the same contempt for these appetites;

To eat and drink can no perfection be. CONQUEST OF GRANADA.

The Earl of Essex is of a different opinion, and seems to place the chief happiness of a general therein.

Were but commanders half so well rewarded,
Then they might eat. BANK'S Earl of Essex.

But if we may believe one, who knows more than either, the devil himself; we shall find eating to be an affair of more moment than is generally imagined.

Gods are immortal only by their food.
LUCIFER in the State of Innocence.

King. What's that!
Hunc. O[1] spare my blushes; but I mean a husband.
King. If that be all, I have provided one,
A husband great in arms, whose warlike sword
Streams with the yellow blood of slaughter'd giants,
Whose name in Terrâ Incognitâ is known,
Whose valour, wisdom, virtue make a noise,
Great as the kettle-drums of twenty armies.
Hunc. Whom does my royal father mean?
King. Tom Thumb.
Hunc. Is it possible?
King. Ha! the window-blinds are gone,
[2] A country dance of joy is in your face.
Your eyes spit fire, your cheeks grow red as beef.
Hunc. O, there's a magic-music in that sound,
Enough to turn me into beef indeed!
Yes, I will own, since licens'd by your word,
I'll own Tom Thumb the cause of all my grief.
For him I've sigh'd, I've wept, I've gnaw'd my sheets.
King. Oh! thou shalt gnaw thy tender sheets no more.
A husband thou shalt have to mumble now.

[1] 'This expression is enough of itself,' says Mr. D——s, 'utterly to destroy the character of Huncamunca!' yet we find a woman of no abandon'd character in Dryden adventuring farther, and thus excusing herself;

> To speak our wishes first, forbid it pride,
> Forbid it modesty; true, they forbid it,
> But nature does not: when we are athirst,
> Or hungry, will imperious Nature stay,
> Nor eat, nor drink, before 'tis bid fall on. CLEOMENES.

Cassandra speaks before she is asked: Huncamunca afterwards. Cassandra speaks her wishes to her lover: Huncamunca only to her father.

[2] Her eyes resistless magic bear,
Angels, I see, and gods are dancing there.
LEE'S SOPHONISBA.

Hunc. Oh! happy sound! henceforth let no one tell
That Huncamunca shall lead apes in hell.
Oh! I am overjoy'd!
King. I see thou art.
Joy lightens in thy eyes, and thunders from thy brows;
Transports, like lightning, dart along thy soul,
As small-shot through a hedge.
Hunc. Oh! say not small.
King. This happy news shall on our tongue ride post,
Ourself we bear the happy news to Thumb.
Yet think not, daughter, that your powerful charms
Must still detain the hero from his arms;
Various his duty, various his delight;
Now in his turn to kiss, and now to fight;
And now to kiss again. So, mighty[2] Jove,
When with excessive thund'ring tir'd above,
Comes down to earth, and takes a bit——and then
Flies to his trade of thund'ring back again.

SCENE V.

GRIZZLE, HUNCAMUNCA.

[3] *Griz.* Oh! Huncamunca, Huncamunca, oh!
Thy pouting-breasts, like kettle-drums of brass,

[1] Mr. Dennis, in that excellent tragedy, call'd Liberty Asserted, which is thought to have given so great a stroke to the late French king, hath frequent imitations of this beautiful speech of king Arthur;

Conquest light'ning in his eyes, and thund'ring in his arm.
Joy lighten'd in her eyes.
Joys like light'ning dart along my soul.

[2] Jove with excessive thund'ring tir'd above,
Comes down for ease, enjoys a nymph, and then
Mounts dreadful, and to thund'ring goes again. GLORIANA.

[3] This beautiful line, which ought, says Mr. W——, to be written in gold, is imitated in the new Sophonisba;

Beat everlasting loud alarms of joy;
As bright as brass they are, and oh, as hard;
Oh Huncamunca, Huncamunca! oh!

Hunc. Ha! dost thou know me, princess as I am,
[1]That thus of me you dare to make your game?

Griz. Oh Huncamunca, well I know that you
A princess are, and a king's daughter too;
But love no meanness scorns, no grandeur fears;
Love often lords into the cellar bears,
And bids the sturdy porter come up stairs.
For what's too high for love, or what's too low?
Oh Huncamunca, Huncamunca, oh!

Hunc. But, granting all you say of love were true,
My love, alas! is to another due!
In vain to me a suitoring you come,
For I'm already promis'd to Tom Thumb.

Griz. And can my princess such a durgen wed,
One fitter for your pocket than your bed!
Advis'd by me, the worthless baby shun,
Or you will ne'er be brought to bed of one.
Oh take me to thy arms, and never flinch,
Who am a man by Jupiter ev'ry inch.
[2]Then while in joys together lost we lie,
I'll press thy soul while gods stand wishing by.

Oh! Sophonisba, Sophonisba, oh!
Oh! Narva, Narva, oh!

The author of a song, call'd Duke upon Duke, hath improv'd it.

Alas! O Nick, O Nick, alas!

Where, by the help of a little false-spelling, you have two meanings in the repeated words.

[1] Edith, in the Bloody Brother, speaks to her lover in the same familiar language:

Your grace is full of game.

[2] Traverse the glitt'ring chambers of the sky,
Borne on a cloud in view of fate I'll lie,
And press her soul while gods stand wishing by. HANNIBAL.

Hunc. If, Sir, what you insinuate you prove,
All obstacles of promise you remove;
For all engagements to a man must fall,
Whene'er that man is prov'd no man at all.
Griz. Oh! let him seek some dwarf, some fairy miss,
Where no joint-stool must lift him to the kiss!
But by the stars and glory you appear
Much fitter for a Prussian grenadier;
One globe alone on Atlas' shoulders rests,
Two globes are less than Huncamunca's breasts;
The milky way is not so white, that's flat,
And sure thy breasts are full as large as that.
Hunc. Oh, Sir, so strong your eloquence I find,
It is impossible to be unkind.
Griz. Ah! speak that o'er again, and let the[1] sound
From one pole to another pole rebound;
The earth and sky each be a battledoor,
And keep the sound, that shuttlecock, up an hour;
To Doctors' Commons for a licence I,
Swift as an arrow from a bow, will fly.
Hunc. Oh no! lest some disaster we should meet,
'Twere better to be marry'd at the Fleet.
Griz. Forbid it all ye powers, a princess should
By that vile place contaminate her blood;
My quick return shall to my charmer prove
I travel on the[2] post-horses of love.
Hunc. Those post-horses to me will seem too slow

[1] Let the four winds from distant corners meet,
And on their wings first bear it into France;
Then back again to Edina's proud walls,
Till victim to the sound th' aspiring city falls. ALBION QUEENS.

[2] I do not remember any metaphors so frequent in the tragic poets, as those borrow'd from riding post.

The gods and opportunity ride post. HANNIBAL.

Though they should fly swift as the gods, when they
Ride on behind that post-boy, Opportunity.

SCENE VI.

TOM THUMB, HUNCAMUNCA.

Thumb. Where is my princess, where's my Huncamunca?
Where are those eyes, those cardmatches of love,
That[1] light up all with love my waxen soul?
Where is that face, which artful nature made
[2]In the same mould where Venus' self was cast?

——Let's rush together,
For death rides post. DUKE OF GUISE.

Destruction gallops to thy murder post. GLORIANA.

[1] This image too very often occurs;

——Bright as when thy eye
First lighted up our loves. AURENGZEBE.

This not a crown alone lights up my name. BUSIRIS.

[2] There is a great dissension among the poets concerning the method of making man. One tells his mistress that the mould she was made in being lost, heaven cannot form such another. Lucifer, in Dryden, gives a merry description of his own formation;

Whom heaven neglecting, made and scarce design'd,
But threw me in for number to the rest.
STATE OF INNOCENCE.

In one place the same poet supposes man to be made of metal;

I was form'd
Of that coarse metal, which when she was made,
The Gods threw by for rubbish. ALL FOR LOVE.

In another, of dough;

When the Gods moulded up the paste of man,
Some of their clay was left upon their hands,
And so they made Egyptians. CLEOMENES.

Hunc. [1] Oh! what is music to the ear that's deaf,
Or a goose-pye to him that has no taste?
What are the praises now to me, since I
Am promis'd to another?
Thumb. Ha! promis'd?
Hunc. Too sure; 'tis written in the book of fate.
Thumb. [2] Then will I tear away the leaf
Wherein it's writ, or if fate won't allow
So large a gap within its journal-book,
I'll blot it out at least.

In another, of clay;

———Rubbish of remaining clay. SEBASTIAN.

One makes the soul of wax;

Her waxen soul begins to melt apace. ANNA BULLEN.

Another of flint;

Sure our two souls have somewhere been acquainted,
In former beings, or struck out together,
One spark to Afric flew, and one to Portugal. SEBASTIAN.

To omit the great quantities of iron, brazen and leaden souls which are so plenty in modern authors—I cannot omit the dress of a soul as we find it in Dryden;

Souls shirted but with air. KING ARTHUR.

Nor can I pass by a particular sort of soul in a particular sort of description, in the New Sophonisba.

Ye mysterious powers,
——Whether thro' your gloomy depths I wander,
Or on the mountains walk, give me the calm,
The steady smiling soul, where wisdom sheds
Eternal sunshine, and eternal joy.

[1] This line Mr. Banks has plunder'd entire in his Anna Bullen.

[2] Good heaven! the book of fate before me lay,
But to tear out the journal of that day.
Or if the order of the world below,
Will not the gap of one whole day allow,
Give me that minute when she made her vow.

CONQUEST OF GRANADA.

SCENE VII.

GLUMDALCA, TOM THUMB, HUNCAMUNCA.

Glum. [1] I need not ask if you are Huncamunca. Your brandy-nose proclaims———

Hunc. I am a princess;
Nor need I ask who you are.

Glum. A giantess;
The queen of those who made and unmade queens.

Hunc. The man, whose chief ambition is to be
My sweetheart, hath destroy'd these mighty giants.

Glum. Your sweetheart? Dost thou think the man, who once
Hath worn my easy chains, will e'er wear thine?

Hunc. Well may your chains be easy, since, if fame
Says true, they have been try'd on twenty husbands.
[2] The glove or boot, so many times pull'd on,
May well sit easy on the hand or foot.

Glum. I glory in the number, and when I
Sit poorly down, like thee, content with one,
Heaven change this face for one as bad as thine.

[1] I know some of the commentators have imagined that Mr. Dryden, in the altercative scene between Cleopatra and Octavia, a scene which Mr. Addison inveighs against with much bitterness, is much beholden to our Author. How just this their observation is, I will not presume to determine.

[2] 'A cobling poet, indeed,' says Mr. D., and yet I believe we may find as monstrous images in the Tragic Authors: I'll put down one;

Untie your folded thoughts, and let them dangle loose as a bride's hair.
INJUR'D LOVE.

Which line seems to have as much title to a milliner's shop, as our Author's to a shoemaker's.

Hunc. Let me see nearer what this beauty is,
That captivates the heart of men by scores.
[*Holds a candle to her face.*
Oh! Heaven, thou art as ugly as the devil.
Glum. You'd give the best of shoes within your shop
To be but half so handsome.
Hunc.———Since you come
[1] To that, I'll put my beauty to the test:
Tom Thumb, I'm yours, if you with me will go.
Glum. Oh! stay, Tom Thumb, and you alone shall fill
That bed where twenty giants us'd to lie.
Thumb. In the balcony that o'erhangs the stage,
I've seen a whore two 'prentices engage;
One half a crown does in his fingers hold,
The other shews a little piece of gold;
She the half guinea wisely does purloin,
And leaves the larger and the baser coin.
Glum. Left, scorn'd, and loath'd for such a chit as this;
[2] I feel the storm that's rising in my mind,
Tempests, and whirlwinds rise, and roll and roar.
I'm all within a hurricane, as if

[1] Mr. L—— takes occasion in this place to commend the great care of our Author to preserve the metre of blank verse, in which Shakespeare, Johnson, and Fletcher were so notoriously negligent; and the moderns, in imitation of our Author, so laudably observant;

———Then does
Your majesty believe that he can be
A traitor? EARL OF ESSEX.

Every page of Sophonisba gives us instances of this excellence.

[2] Love mounts and rolls about my stormy mind. AURENGZEBE.

Tempests and whirlwinds thro' my bosom move. CLEOM.

[1] The world's four winds were pent within my carcase.
[2] Confusion, horror, murder, guts and death!

SCENE VIII.

KING, GLUMDALCA.

King. [3] Sure never was so sad a king as I,
[4] My life is worn as ragged as a coat
A beggar wears; a prince should put it off.
[5] To love a captive and a giantess.
Oh love! Oh love! how great a king art thou!
My tongue's thy trumpet, and thou trumpetest,
Unknown to me, within me. [6] Oh Glumdalca!
Heaven thee design'd a giantess to make,
But an angelic soul was shuffled in.
[7] I am a multitude of walking griefs,
And only on her lips the balm is found,
[8] To spread a plaister that might cure them all.

[1] With such a furious tempest on his brow,
As if the world's four winds were pent within
His blust'ring carcase. ANNA BULLEN.

[2] Verba Tragica.

[3] This speech has been terribly maul'd by the poet.

[4] ———My life is worn to rags;
Not worth a prince's wearing. LOVE TRIUMPHANT.

[5] Must I beg the pity of my slave?
Must a king beg! But love's a greater king,
A tyrant, nay, a devil that possesses me.
He tunes the organ of my voice and speaks,
Unknown to me, within me. SEBASTIAN.

[6] When thou wert form'd heaven did a man begin;
But a brute soul by chance was shuffled in. AURENGZEBE.

[7] I am a multitude
Of walking griefs. NEW SOPHONISBA.

[8] I will take thy scorpion blood,
And lay it to my grief till I have ease. ANNA BULLEN.

Glum. What do I hear?
King. What do I see!
Glum. Oh!
King. Ah!
[1] *Glum.* Ah! wretched queen!
King. Oh! wretched king!
[2] *Glum.* Ah!
King. Oh!

SCENE IX.

TOM THUMB, HUNCAMUNCA, PARSON.

Parson. Happy's the wooing that's not long a doing;
For, if I guess right, Tom Thumb, this night,
Shall give a being to a new Tom Thumb.
Thumb. It shall be my endeavour so to do.
Hunc. Oh! fy upon you, Sir, you make me blush.
Thumb. It is the virgin's sign, and suits you well:

[1] Our Author, who every where shews his great penetration into human nature, here outdoes himself: where a less judicious poet would have raised a long scene of whining love, he, who understood the passions better, and that so violent an affection as this must be too big for utterance, chooses rather to send his characters off in this sullen and doleful manner: in which admirable conduct he is imitated by the author of the justly celebrated Eurydice. Dr. Young seems to point at this violence of passion:

——————Passion chokes
Their words, and they're the statues of despair.

And Seneca tells us, 'Curæ leves loquuntur, ingentes stupent.' The story of the Egyptian king in Herodotus is too well known to need to be inserted; I refer the more curious reader to the excellent Montaigne, who hath written an essay on this subject.

[2] To part is death——————
——————'Tis death to part.
——————Ah!
——————Oh! DON CARLOS.

[1] I know not where, nor how, nor what I am;
[2] I'm so transported I have lost myself.

Hunc. Forbid it, all ye stars, for you're so small,
That were you lost you'd find yourself no more,
So the unhappy sempstress once, they say,
Her needle in a pottle, lost, of hay;

[1] Nor know I whether
What am I, who or where. BUSIRIS.

I was I know not what, and am I know not how. GLORIANA.

[2] To understand sufficiently the beauty of this passage, it will be necessary that we comprehend every man to contain two selfs. I shall not attempt to prove this from philosophy, which the poets make so plainly evident,

One runs away from the other;
——Let me demand your majesty,
Why fly you from yourself? DUKE OF GUISE.

In a 2d, one self is a guardian to the other;
Leave me the care of me. CONQUEST OF GRANADA.

Again,
Myself am to myself less near. Ibid.

In the same, the first self is proud of the second.
I myself am proud of me. STATE OF INNOCENCE.

In a 3d, distrustful of him;
Fain I would tell, but whisper it in my ear,
That none besides might hear, nay not myself.
EARL OF ESSEX.

In a 4th, honours him;
I honour Rome,
And honour too myself. SOPHONISBA.

In a 5th, at variance with him;
Leave me not thus at variance with myself. BUSIRIS.

Again, in a 6th;
I find myself divided from myself. MEDEA.

She seemed the sad effigies of herself. BANKS.

Assist me, Zulema, if thou wouldst be
The friend thou seemest, assist me against me.
ALB. QUEENS.

In vain she look'd, and look'd, and made her moan,
For ah, the needle was for ever gone.

Parson. Long may they live, and love, and propagate,
Till the whole land be peopled with Tom Thumbs.
[1] So when the Cheshire cheese a maggot breeds,
Another and another still succeeds:
By thousands, and ten thousands they increase,
Till one continued maggot fills the rotten cheese.

SCENE X.

NOODLE, *and then* GRIZZLE.

Nood. [2] Sure Nature means to break her solid chain,
Or else unfix the world, and in a rage
To hurl it from its axletree and hinges;
All things are so confus'd, the king's in love,
The queen is drunk, the princess married is.

Griz. Oh! Noodle, hast thou Huncamunca seen?

Nood. I've seen a thousand sights this day, where none
Are by the wonderful bitch herself outdone,
The king, the queen, and all the court are sights.

[1] Mr. F—— imagines this parson to have been a Welsh one from his simile.

From all which it appears that there are two selfs; and therefore Tom Thumb's losing himself is no such solecism as it hath been represented by men, rather ambitious of criticizing, than qualify'd to criticize.

[2] Our Author hath been plundered here, according to custom.

Great nature, break thy chain that links together
The fabric of the world, and make a chaos
Like that within my soul. LOVE TRIUMPHANT.

——Startle Nature, unfix the globe,
And hurl it from its axletree and hinges. ALB. QUEENS.

The tott'ring earth seems sliding off its props.

Griz. [1] D——n your delay, you trifler, are you drunk, ha?
I will not hear one word but Huncamunca.
Nood. By this time she is marry'd to Tom Thumb.
Griz. [2] My Huncamunca!
Nood. Your Huncamunca.
Tom Thumb's Huncamunca, every man's Huncamunca.
Griz. If this be true, all womankind are damn'd.
Nood. If it be not, may I be so myself.
Griz. See where she comes! I'll not believe a word
Against that face, upon whose [3] ample brow
Sits innocence with majesty enthron'd.

GRIZZLE, HUNCAMUNCA.

Griz. Where has my Huncamunca been? See here. The licence in my hand!
Hunc. Alas! Tom Thumb.
Griz. Why dost thou mention him?
Hunc. Ah me! Tom Thumb.
Griz. What means my lovely Huncamunca?
Hunc. Hum!
Griz. Oh! speak.
Hunc. Hum!
Griz. Ha, your every word is hum:
[4] You force me still to answer you, Tom Thumb.

[1] D——n your delay, ye torturers proceed,
I will not hear one word but Almahide. CONQUEST OF GRANADA.

[2] Mr. Dryden hath imitated this in All for Love.

[3] This Miltonic style abounds in the New Sophonisba.

——And on her ample brow
Sat majesty.

[4] Your ev'ry answer still so ends in that,
You force me still to answer you Morat. AURENGZEBE.

Tom Thumb, I'm on the rack, I'm in a flame.
[1] Tom Thumb, Tom Thumb, Tom Thumb, you love the name;
So pleasing is that sound, that were you dumb
You still would find a voice to cry, Tom Thumb.
Hone. Oh! be not hasty to proclaim my doom,
My ample heart for more than one has room;
A maid, like me, Heaven form'd at least for two,
[2] I married him, and now I'll marry you.
Griz. Ha! dost thou own thy falsehood to my face?
Think'st thou that I will share thy husband's place?
Since to that office one cannot suffice,
And since you scorn to dine one single dish on,
Go, get your husband put into commission.
Commissioners to discharge, (ye Gods) it fine is,
The duty of a husband to your highness;
Yet think not long I will my rival bear,
Or unreveng'd the slightest willow wear;
The gloomy, brooding tempest, now confin'd
Within the hollow caverns of my mind,
In dreadful whirl shall roll along the coasts,
Shall thin the land of all the men it boasts,
[3] And cram up ev'ry chink of hell with ghosts.

[1] Morat, Morat, Morat, you love the name. AURENGZEBE.

[2] 'Here is a sentiment for the virtuous Huncamunca,' (says Mr. D——s) and yet, with the leave of this great man, the virtuous Panthea in Cyrus hath an heart every whit as ample;

For two I must confess are gods to me,
Which is my Abradates first, and thee. CYRUS THE GREAT.

Nor is the lady in Love Triumphant more reserv'd, though not so intelligible;

I am so divided,
That I grieve most for both, and love both most.

[3] A ridiculous supposition to any one who considers the great and extensive largeness of hell, says a commentator; but not so to those

[1] So have I seen, in some dark winter's day,
A sudden storm rush down the sky's highway,
Sweep through the streets with terrible ding dong,
Gush through the spouts, and wash whole clouds along.
The crowded shops, the thronging vermin skreen,
Together cram the dirty and the clean,
And not one shoe-boy in the street is seen.

Hunc. Oh, fatal rashness! should his fury slay
My hapless bridegroom on his wedding-day;
I, who this morn of two chose which to wed,
May go again this night alone to bed.
[2] So have I seen some wild unsettled fool,
Who had her choice of this and that joint-stool;
To give the preference to either loth,
And fondly coveting to sit on both:
While the two stools her sitting-part confound,
Between 'em both fall squat upon the ground.

who consider the great expansion of immaterial substance. Mr. Banks makes one soul to be so expanded, that heaven could not contain it;

The heavens are all too narrow for her soul.

VIRTUE BETRAY'D.

The Persian Princess hath a passage not unlike the Author of this;

We will send such shoals of murder'd slaves,
Shall glut hell's empty regions.

This threatens to fill hell even though it was empty; Lord Grizzle, only to fill up the chinks, supposing the rest already full.

[1] Mr. Addison is generally thought to have had this simile in his eye, when he wrote that beautiful one at the end of the third act of his Cato.

[2] This beautiful simile is founded on a proverb which does honour to the English language;

Between two stools the breech falls to the ground.

I am not so well pleased with any written remains of the ancients, as with those little aphorisms which verbal tradition hath delivered down to us, under the title of Proverbs. It were to be wished that instead of filling their pages with the fabulous theology of the pagans, our modern poets would think it worth their while to enrich their works

ACT III. SCENE 1.

SCENE, KING ARTHUR'S *Palace.*

[1] GHOST, *solus.*

HAIL! ye black horrors of midnight's midnoon!
Ye fairies, goblins, bats and screech-owls, hail!

with the proverbial sayings of their ancestors. Mr. Dryden hath chronicled one in heroic;

Two ifs scarce make one possibility. CONQUEST OF GRANADA.

My Lord Bacon is of opinion that whatever is known of arts and sciences might be proved to have lurked in the Proverbs of Solomon. I am of the same opinion in relation to those above mentioned—at least, I am confident that a more perfect system of ethics, as well as economy, might be compiled out of them than is at present extant, either in the works of the ancient philosophers, or those more valuable, as more voluminous ones of the modern divines.

[1] Of all the particulars in which the modern stage falls short of the ancient, there is none so much to be lamented as the great scarcity of ghosts. Whence this proceeds, I will not presume to determine. Some are of opinion, that the moderns are unequal to that sublime language which a ghost ought to speak. One says ludicrously, that ghosts are out of fashion; another, that they are properer for comedy; forgetting, I suppose, that Aristotle hath told us, that a ghost is the soul of tragedy; for so I render the ψυχὴ ὁ μῦθος τῆς τραγωδίας, which M. Dacier, amongst others, hath mistaken; I suppose misled by not understanding the Fabula of the Latins, which signifies a Ghost as well as a Fable.

—'Te premet nox, fabulæque manes.' HOR.

Of all the ghosts that have ever appeared on the stage, a very learned and judicious foreign critic gives the preference to this of our Author. These are his words speaking of this tragedy:

——'Nec quidquam in illâ admirabilius quàm phasma quoddam horrendum, quod omnibus aliis spectris, quibuscum scatet Angelorum tragœdia, longè (pace D—ysii V. Doctiss. dixerim) prætulerim.'

And Oh! ye mortal watchmen, whose hoarse throats
Th' immortal ghosts' dread croakings counterfeit,
All hail——Ye dancing phantoms, who by day,
Are some condemn'd to fast, some feast in fire;
Now play in church-yards, skipping o'er the graves,
To the [1] loud music of the silent bell,
All hail!

SCENE II.

KING *and* GHOST.

King. What noise is this—What villain dares,
At this dread hour, with feet and voice profane,
Disturb our royal walls?
Ghost. One who defies
Thy empty power to hurt him; [2] one who dares
Walk in thy bedchamber.
King. Presumptuous slave!
Thou diest.
Ghost. Threaten others with that word,
[3] I am a ghost, and am already dead.

[1] We have already given instances of this figure.

[2] Almanzor reasons in the same manner;

———A ghost I'll be,
And from a ghost, you know, no place is free.

CONQUEST OF GRANADA.

[3] 'The man who writ this wretched pun,' says Mr. D., 'would have picked your pocket:' which he proceeds to shew not only bad in itself, but doubly so on so solemn an occasion. And yet in that excellent play of Liberty Asserted, we find something very much resembling a pun in the mouth of a mistress, who is parting with a lover she is fond of;

UL. Oh, mortal woe! one kiss and then farewell.
IRENE. The gods have given to others to fare well.
O miserably must Irene fare.

King. Ye stars! 'tis well; were thy last hour to come
This moment had been it; [1] yet by thy shroud
I'll pull thee backward, squeez thee to a bladder,
Till thou dost groan thy nothingness away.
Thou fly'st! 'Tis well. [*Ghost retires.*
[2] I thought what was the courage of a ghost!
Yet, dare not, on thy life—Why say I that,
Since life thou hast not?—Dare not walk again
Within these walls, on pain of the Red-sea.
For, if henceforth I ever find thee here,
As sure, sure as a gun, I'll have thee laid——
Ghost. Were the Red-sea a sea of Holland's gin,
The liquor (when alive) whose very smell
I did detest, did loath—yet, for the sake
Of Thomas Thumb, I would be laid therein.
King. Ha! said you!
Ghost. Yes, my liege, I said Tom Thumb,
Whose father's ghost I am—once not unknown
To mighty Arthur. But, I see, 'tis true,
The dearest friend, when dead, we all forget.
King. 'Tis he, it is the honest gaffer Thumb.

Agamemnon, in the Victim, is full as facetious on the most solemn occasion, that of sacrificing his daughter;

> Yes, daughter, yes; you will assist the priest
> Yes, you must offer up your—vows for Greece.

[1] I'll pull thee backwards by thy shroud to light,
Or else I'll squeeze thee, like a bladder, there,
And make thee groan thyself away to air. CONQUEST OF GRANADA.

Snatch me, ye gods, this moment into nothing. CYRUS THE GREAT.

[2] So, art thou gone? Thou canst no conquest boast,
I thought what was the courage of a ghost. CONQUEST OF GRANADA.

King Arthur seems to be as brave a fellow as Almanzor, who says most heroically,

——In spite of ghosts I'll on.

Oh! let me press thee in my eager arms,
Thou best of ghosts! thou something more than ghost!
Ghost. Would I were something more, that we again
Might feel each other in the warm embrace.
But now I have th' advantage of my king.
[1] For I feel thee, whilst thou dost not feel me.
King. But say, [2] thou dearest air, Oh! say what dread,
Important business sends thee back to earth?
Ghost. Oh! then prepare to hear——which but to hear
Is full enough to send thy spirit hence.
Thy subjects up in arms, by Grizzle led,
Will, ere the rosy-finger'd morn shall ope
The shutters of the sky, before the gate
Of this thy royal palace, swarming spread:
[3] So have I seen the bees in clusters swarm,
So have I seen the stars in frosty nights,
So have I seen the sand in windy days,
So have I seen the ghosts on Pluto's shore,
So have I seen the flowers in spring arise,
So have I seen the leaves in autumn fall,
So have I seen the fruits in summer smile,
So have I seen the snow in winter frown.
King. D——n all thou hast seen!——dost thou beneath the shape
Of gaffer Thumb, come hither to abuse me
With similes to keep me on the rack?

[1] The ghost of Lausaria in Cyrus, is a plain copy of this, and is therefore worth reading,

> Ah, Cyrus!
> Thou may'st as well grasp water, or fleet air,
> As think of touching my immortal shade. CYRUS THE GREAT.

[2] Thou better part of heavenly air. CON. OF GRANADA.

[3] 'A string of similes (says one) proper to be hung up in the cabinet of a prince.'

Hence—or, by all the torments of thy hell,
[1] I'll run thee through the body, though thou'st none.
Ghost. Arthur, beware! I must this moment hence,
Not frighted by your voice, but by the cocks!
Arthur beware, beware, beware, beware!
Strive to avert thy yet impending fate;
For if thou'rt kill'd to-day,
To-morrow all thy care will come too late.

SCENE III.

KING, *solus.*

King. Oh! stay, and leave me not uncertain thus!
And whilst thou tellest me what's like my fate,
Oh! teach me how I may avert it too!
Curst be the man who first a simile made!
Curst ev'ry bard who writes!——So have I seen
Those whose comparisons are just and true,
And those who liken things not like at all.
The devil is happy that the whole creation
Can furnish out no simile to his fortune.

SCENE IV.

KING, QUEEN.

Queen. What is the cause, my Arthur, that you steal
Thus silently from Dollallolla's breast?

[1] This passage hath been understood several different ways by the commentators. For my part, I find it difficult to understand it at all. Mr. Dryden says,

> I have heard something how two bodies meet,
> But how two souls join I know not.

Why dost thou leave me in the [1] dark alone,
When well thou know'st I am afraid of sprites?
King. Oh Dollallolla! do not blame my love!
I hop'd the fumes of last night's punch had laid
Thy lovely eyelids fast.—But, Oh! I find
There is no power in drams to quiet wives;
Each morn, as the returning sun, they wake,
And shine upon their husbands.
Queen. Think, Oh think!
What a surprise it must be to the sun,
Rising, to find the vanish'd world away.
What less can be the wretched wife's surprise
When, stretching out her arms to hold thee fast,
She found her useless bolster in her arms,
[2] Think, think on that—Oh! think, think well on that!
I do remember also to have read
[3] In Dryden's Ovid's Metamorphosis,
That Jove in form inanimate did lie
With beauteous Danae: and trust me, love,
[4] I fear'd the bolster might have been a Jove.
King. Come to my arms, most virtuous of thy sex;
Oh, Dollallolla! were all wives like thee,
So many husbands never had worn horns.

So that till the body of a spirit be better understood, it will be difficult to understand how it is possible to run him through it.

[1] Cydaria is of the same fearful temper with Dollallolla.

I never durst in darkness be alone. IND. EMP.

[2] Think well of this, think that, think every way. SOPHONISBA.

[3] These quotations are more usual in the comic, than in the tragic writers.

[4] 'This distress (says Mr. D—) I must allow to be extremely beautiful, and tends to heighten the virtuous character of Dollallolla, who is so exceeding delicate that she is in the highest apprehension from the inanimate embrace of a bolster. An example worthy of imitation for all our writers of tragedy.'

Should Huncamunca of thy worth partake,
Tom Thumb indeed were blest—Oh fatal name!
For didst thou know one quarter what I know,
Then wouldst thou know—Alas! what thou woulds't know!

Queen. What can I gather hence? Why dost thou speak
Like men who carry rareeshows about?
'Now you shall see, gentlemen, what you shall see.'
O tell me more, or thou hast told too much.

SCENE V.

KING, QUEEN, NOODLE.

Nood. Long life attend your majesties serene,
Great Arthur, king, and Dollallolla, queen!
Lord Grizzle, with a bold rebellious crowd,
Advances to the palace, threat'ning loud,
Unless the princess be deliver'd straight
And the victorious Thumb, without his pate,
They are resolv'd to batter down the gate.

SCENE VI.

KING, QUEEN, HUNCAMUNCA, NOODLE.

King. See where the princess comes! Where is Tom Thumb?

Hunc. Oh! Sir, about an hour and a half ago
He sallied out t'encounter with the foe,
And swore, unless his fate had him misled,
From Grizzle's shoulders to cut off his head,
And serve't up with your chocolate in bed.

King. 'Tis well, I found one devil told us both.
Come Dollallolla, Huncamunca come,
Within we'll wait for the victorious Thumb;
In peace and safety we secure may stay,
While to his arm we trust the bloody fray;
Though men and giants should conspire with gods,
[1] He is alone equal to all these odds.

Queen. He is, indeed, a [2]helmet to us all,
While he supports we need not fear to fall;

[1] 'Credat Judæus Appella,
Non ego'——
(says Mr. D.)——For passing over the absurdity of being equal to odds, can we possibly suppose a little insignificant fellow——I say again, a little insignificant fellow, able to vie with a strength which all the Sampsons and Hercules's of antiquity would be unable to encounter?

I shall refer this incredulous critic to Mr. Dryden's defence of his Almanzor; and lest that should not satisfy him, I shall quote a few lines from the speech of a much braver fellow than Almanzor, Mr. Johnson's Achilles;

Though human race rise in embattl'd hosts,
To force her from my arms—Oh! son of Atreus!
By that immortal pow'r, whose deathless spirit
Informs this earth, I will oppose them all. VICTIM.

[2] 'I have heard of being supported by a staff (says Mr. D.) but never of being supported by a helmet.' I believe he never heard of sailing with wings, which he may read in no less a poet than Mr. Dryden.

Unless we borrow wings, and sail through air.
LOVE TRIUMPHANT.

What will he say to a kneeling valley?

——————I'll stand
Like a safe valley, that low bends the knee
To some aspiring mountain. INJUR'D LOVE.

I am asham'd of so ignorant a carper, who doth not know that an epithet in tragedy is very often no other than an expletive. Do not we read in the new Sophonisba of 'grinding chains, blue plagues, white occasions, and blue serenity?' Nay, it is not the adjective only, but sometimes half a sentence is put by way of expletive, as 'Beauty pointed high with spirit,' in the same play——and, 'In the lap of blessing, to be most curst,' in the Revenge.

His arm dispatches all things to our wish,
And serves up ev'ry foe's head in a dish.
Void is the mistress of the house of care,
While the good cook presents the bill of fare;
Whether the cod, that northern king of fish,
Or duck, or goose, or pig, adorn the dish,
No fears the number of her guests afford,
But at her hour she sees the dinner on the board.

SCENE VII. *A Plain.*

LORD GRIZZLE, FOODLE, *and* REBELS.

Griz. Thus far our arms with victory are crown'd;
For though we have not fought, yet we have found
[1] No enemy to fight withal.
Food. Yet I,
Methinks, would willingly avoid this day,
[2] This first of April, to engage our foes.
Griz. This day, of all the days of th' year, I'd choose,
For on this day my grandmother was born.
Gods! I will make Tom Thumb an April-fool;
[3] Will teach his wit an errand it ne'er knew,
And send it post to the Elysian shades.
Food. I'm glad to find our army is so stout,
Nor does it move my wonder less than joy.

[1] A victory like that of Almanzor:
Almanzor is victorious without fight.
CONQUEST OF GRANADA.

[2] Well have we chose an happy day for fight.
For every man in course of time hath found,
Some days are lucky, some unfortunate. K. ARTHUR.

[3] We read of such another in Lee;
Teach his rude wit a flight she never made,
And send her post to the Elysian shade. GLORIANA.

Griz. [1] What friends we have, and how we came so strong,
I'll softly tell you as we march along.

SCENE VIII. *Thunder and Lightning.*

TOM THUMB, GLUMDALCA, *cum suis.*

Thumb. Oh, Noodle! hast thou seen a day like this?
[2] The unborn thunder rumbles o'er our heads,
[3] As if the gods meant to unhinge the world,
And heaven and earth in wild confusion hurl;
Yet will I boldly tread the tott'ring ball.
Merl. Tom Thumb!
Thumb. What voice is this I hear?
Merl. Tom Thumb!
Thumb. Again it calls.
Merl. Tom Thumb!
Glum. It calls again.
Thumb. Appear, whoe'er thou art, I fear thee not.
Merl. Thou hast no cause to fear, I am thy friend,
Merlin by name, a conjurer by trade,
And to my art thou dost thy being owe.
Thumb. How!
Merl. Hear then the mystic getting of Tom Thumb.

[1] These lines are copied verbatim in the Indian Emperor.

[2] Unborn thunder rolling in a cloud. CONQ. OF GRANADA.

[3] Were heaven and earth in wild confusion hurl'd.
Should the rash Gods unhinge the rolling world,
Undaunted would I tread the tott'ring ball,
Crush'd, but unconquer'd, in the dreadful fall. FEMALE WARRIOR.

[1] His father was a ploughman plain,
His mother milk'd the cow;
And yet the way to get a son
This couple knew not how;
Until such time the good old man
To learned Merlin goes,
And there to him in great distress,
In secret manner shews,
How in his heart he wished to have
A child, in time to come,
To be his heir, though it may be
No bigger than his thumb:
Of which old Merlin was foretold,
That he his wish should have;
And so a son of stature small,
The charmer to him gave.

Thou'st heard the past, look up, and see the future.
Thumb. [2] Lost in amazement's gulf, my senses sink;
See there, Glumdalca, see another [3] me!
Glum. O sight of horror! see, you are devour'd
By the expanded jaws of a red cow.
Merl. Let not these sights deter thy noble mind,
[4] For lo! a sight more glorious courts thy eyes;

[1] See the history of TOM THUMB, page 2.

[2] ——Amazement swallows up my sense,
And in th' impetuous whirl of circling fate
Drinks down my reason. PERSIAN PRINCESS.

[3] ———I have outfaced myself,
What! am I two? is there another me? K. ARTHUR.

[4] The character of Merlin is wonderful throughout, but most so in this prophetic part. We find several of these prophecies in the tragic authors, who frequently take this opportunity to pay a compliment to their country, and sometimes to their prince. None but our Author (who seems to have detested the least appearance to flattery) would have passed by such an opportunity of being a political prophet.

See from afar a theatre arise;
There ages, yet unborn, shall tribute pay
To the heroic actions of this day:
Then buskin tragedy at length shall choose
Thy name the best supporter of her muse.
Thumb. Enough, let every warlike music sound,
We fall contented, if we fall renown'd.

SCENE IX.

LORD GRIZZLE, FOODLE, REBELS, *on one side.*

TOM THUMB, GLUMDALCA, *on the other.*

Food. At length the enemy advances nigh,
[1] I hear them with my ear, and see them with my eye.
Griz. Draw all your swords: for liberty we fight;
[2] And liberty the mustard is of life.
Thumb. Are you the man, whom men fam'd Grizzle name?
Griz. [3]Are you the much more fam'd Tom Thumb?
Thumb. The same.
Griz. Come on, our worth upon ourselves we'll prove;
For liberty I fight.

[1] I saw the villain Myron, with these eyes I saw him. BUSIRIS.

In both which places it is intimated, that it is sometimes possible to see with other eyes than your own.

[2] 'This mustard (says Mr. D.) is enough to turn one's stomach': I would be glad to know what idea the author had in his head when he wrote it. This will be, I believe, best explain'd by a line of Mr. Dennis.

And gave him liberty, the salt of life. LIBERTY ASSERTED.

The understanding that can digest the one, will not rise at the other.

[3] *Han.* Are you the chief, whom men fam'd Scipio call?
Scip. Are you the much more famous Hannibal? HANNIBAL.

Thumb. And I for love.

[*A bloody engagement between the two armies here; drums beating, trumpets sounding, thunder and lightning.—They fight off and on several times. Some fall.* Grizzle *and* Glumdalca *remain.*

Glum. Turn, coward, turn, nor from a woman fly.

Griz. Away—thou art too ignoble for my arm.

Glum. Have at thy heart.

Griz. Nay, then I thrust at thine.

Glum. You push too well; you've run me through the guts,
And I am dead.

Griz. Then there's an end of one.

Thumb. When thou art dead, then there's an end of two,
[1] Villain.

Griz. Tom Thumb!

Thumb. Rebel!

Griz. Tom Thumb!

Thumb. Hell!

Griz. Huncamunca!

Thumb. Thou hast it there.

Griz. Too sure I feel it.

Thumb. To hell then, like a rebel as you are,
And give my service to the rebels there.

Griz. Triumph not, Thumb, nor think thou shalt enjoy
Thy Huncamunca undisturb'd; I'll send

[1] Dr. Young seems to have copied this engagement in his Busiris:

Myr. Villain!
Mem. Myron!
Myr. Rebel!
Mem. Myron!
Myr. Hell!
Mem. Mandane!

[1] My ghost to fetch her to the other world;
[2] It shall but bait at heaven, and then return.
[3] But ha! I feel death rumbling in my brains,
[4] Some kinder sprite knocks softly at my soul
And gently whispers it to haste away.
I come, I come, most willingly I come.
[5] So when some city wife, for country air,
To Hampstead or to Highgate does repair;
Her, to make haste, her husband does implore,
And cries, 'My dear, the coach is at the door.'
With equal wish, desirous to be gone,
She gets into the coach, and then she cries—'Drive on!'

Thumb. With those last words [6] he vomited his soul,
Which [7] like whipt cream, the devil will swallow down.
Bear off the body, and cut off the head,
Which I will to the king in triumph lug.
Rebellion's dead, and now I'll go to breakfast.

[1] This last speech of my Lord Grizzle hath been of great service to our poets:

———I'll hold it fast
As life, and when life's gone I'll hold this last;
And if thou tak'st it from me when I'm slain,
I'll send my ghost and fetch it back again.

CONQ. OF GRANADA.

[2] My soul should with such speed obey,
It should not bait at heaven to stop its way.

Lee seems to have had this last in his eye;

'Twas not my purpose, Sir, to tarry there,
I would but go to heaven to take the air. GLORIANA.

[3] A rising vapour rumbling in my brains. CLEOMENES.

[4] Some kind sprite knocks softly at my soul,
To tell me fate's at hand.

[5] Mr. Dryden seems to have had this simile in his eye, when he says,

My soul is packing up, and just on wing. CONQ. OF GRANADA.

[6] And in a purple vomit pour'd his soul. CLEOMENES.

[7] The devil swallows vulgar souls
Like whipt cream. SEBASTIAN.

SCENE X.

KING, QUEEN, HUNCAMUNCA, *and* COURTIERS.

King. Open the prisons, set the wretched free,
And bid our treasurer disburse six pounds
To pay their debts.———Let no one weep to-day.
Come, Dollallolla; [1] curse that odious name!
It is so long it asks an hour to speak it.
By heavens! I'll change it into Doll, or Loll,
Or any other civil monosyllable,
That will not tire my tongue.—Come, sit thee down.
Here seated let us view the dancers' sports;
Bid 'em advance. This is the wedding-day
Of Princess Huncamunca and Tom Thumb;
Tom Thumb! who wins two victories [2] to-day
And this way marches, bearing Grizzle's head.

A dance here.

Nood. Oh! monstrous, dreadful, terrible, Oh! Oh!
Deaf be my ears, for ever blind my eyes;
Dumb be my tongue! feet lame! all senses lost!
[3] Howl wolves, grunt bears, hiss snakes, shriek all ye ghosts!

[1] How I could curse my name of Ptolemy!
It is so long it asks an hour to write it.
By heaven! I'll change it into Jove or Mars!
Or any other civil monosyllable,
That will not tire my hand. CLEOMENES.

[2] Here is a visible conjunction of two days in one, by which our Author may have either intended an emblem of a wedding or to insinuate, that men in the honey-moon are apt to imagine time shorter than it is. It brings into my mind a passage in the comedy called The Coffee-House Politician:

We will celebrate this day at my house to-morrow.

[3] These beautiful phrases are all to be found in one single speech of King Arthur, or The British Worthy.

King. What does this blockhead mean?
Nood. I mean, my liege,
[1] Only to grace my tale with decent horror:
Whilst from my garret, twice two stories high,
I look'd abroad into the streets below;
I saw Tom Thumb attended by the mob,
Twice twenty shoeboys, twice two dozen links,
Chairmen and porters, hackney-coachmen, whores;
Aloft he bore the grizly head of Grizzle;
When of a sudden thro' the streets there came
A cow, of larger than the usual size,
And in a moment——guess, Oh! guest the rest!
And in a moment swallow'd up Tom Thumb.
King. Shut up again the prisoners, bid my treasurer
Not give three farthings out—hang all the culprits,
Guilty or not——no matter——Ravish virgins,
Go bid the schoolmasters whip all their boys!
Let lawyers, parsons, and physicians loose,
To rob, impose on, and to kill the world.
Nood. Her majesty the queen is in a swoon.
Queen. Not so much in a swoon, but I have still
Strength to reward the messenger of ill news.
[*Kills* Noodle.
Nood. Oh! I am slain.
Cle. My lover's kill'd, I will revenge him so.
[*Kills the* Queen.
Hunc. My mamma kill'd! vile murderess, beware.
[*Kills* Cleora.
Dood. This for an old grudge to thy heart.
[*Kills* Huncamunca.
Must. And this
I drive to thine, Oh Doodle! for a new one. [*Kills* Doodle.
King. Ha! murderess vile, take that. [*Kills* Mustacha.

[1] I was but teaching him to grace his tale
With decent horror. CLEOMENES.

[1] And take thou this. [*Kills himself and falls.*
So when the child whom nurse from danger guards,
Sends Jack for mustard with a pack of cards,
Kings, queens, and knaves, throw one another down,
Till the whole pack lies scatter'd and o'erthrown;
So all our pack upon the floor is cast,
And all I boast is——that I fall the last. [*Dies.*

[1] We may say with Dryden,

> Death did at length so many slain forget,
> And left the tale, and took them by the great.

I know of no tragedy which comes nearer to this charming and bloody catastrophe than Cleomenes, where the curtain covers five principal characters dead on the stage. These lines too,

> I ask'd no questions then, of who kill'd who?
> The bodies tell the story as they lie—

seem to have belonged more properly to this scene of our Author.—Nor can I help imagining they were originally his. The Rival Ladies too seem beholden to this scene.

> We're now a chain of lovers link'd in death;
> Julia goes first, Gonsalvo hangs on her,
> And Angelina hangs upon Gonsalvo,
> As I on Angelina.

No scene, I believe, ever received greater honours than this. It was applauded by several Encores, a word very unusual in tragedy.—And it was very difficult for the actors to escape without a second slaughter. This I take to be a lively assurance of that fierce spirit of liberty which remains among us, and which Mr. Dryden, in his essay on Dramatic Poetry, hath observed—'Whether custom (says he) hath so insinuated itself into our countrymen, or nature hath so formed them to fierceness, I know not; but they will scarcely suffer combats, and other objects of horror, to be taken from them.'—And indeed I am for having them encouraged in this martial disposition: nor do I believe our victories over the French have been owing to any thing more than those bloody spectacles daily exhibited in our tragedies, of which the French stage is so entirely clear.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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